

# Sustainable Development Action Plan

September 2009 – March 2011



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# Foreword by Secretary of State and Permanent Secretary

Over the last year we have seen the global economy facing recession, companies being severely affected and workers losing their jobs. We face tough times ahead as we chart the path to recovery.

The challenges we face now and in the future are immense: soaring demand and environmental degradation are set to threaten our ability to produce food at the same time as the global population rises to nine billion by 2050. Sustainable development is the only way that we can deal with the crisis of sustainability and build a UK that will flourish in the world of tomorrow. So now more than ever we need to be thinking about balancing environmental, social and economic needs. Instead of setting it aside as a 'luxury' for better times, we must recognise that it is the key to solving our problems.

We have seen some great successes under our Sustainable Development Dialogues (SDDs) through which we are making a global contribution to sustainable development. For example with Mexico we have replicated an approach adopted in the UK called 'national industrial symbiosis', whereby resource efficiency is promoted across different industries through the exchange of materials and by-products between traditionally separate companies. In Mexico the programme has driven efficiency savings in a pilot sector of over £50,000 and over 20,000 tonnes of carbon emissions per year and created 40 new jobs. Industrial symbiosis is also being introduced to China and Brazil under the SDDs. This initiative shows the clear value of sustainable development.

Defra is also working with industry in the UK on more sustainable production and consumption. The clothing industry is an economic success story (globally worth over £500 billion), but has a significant environmental and social footprint. The Sustainable Clothing Action Plan brings together 300 organisations - from high street fashion shops to designers and textile manufacturers - to tackle the environmental impacts and social inequalities of the fashion business. This includes some of the biggest names in UK fashion. M&S, Sainsbury's and Tesco have all pledged to use more recyclable fabrics and to increase their Fairtrade and organic ranges. Tesco is also looking at its cotton supply chain so it can ban cotton that comes from countries that employ child labour. This project is a great example of how we can make the products that we use everyday more sustainable.

It is crucial that Defra itself makes a strong contribution to sustainability. In May 2009 Defra opened its new award-winning building, Lion House, in Alnwick. Designed for sustainability, Lion House was the first office building to get an A+ energy performance certificate and since then it has won numerous awards, including Sustainability Project of the Year from the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. The building has wind turbines, solar panels and biomass heating, which are expected to cut carbon emissions by over 48,000 kg per year, and is actually exporting some of the energy it produces.

Sustainable development is not just about the big things, but also about making real improvements to our quality of life. Defra is committed to working with local and regional Government, as well as the Third Sector, to ensure that everyone can play their part. The Department funded the initial stages of the Every Action Counts (EAC) initiative, to inspire individuals and groups to take action to make their communities more sustainable. Over 130,000 people visited the EAC website, to access training materials developed through the programme, and the initiative trained over a thousand Community Champions. These champions will be taking forward their training to guide community groups to reduce the carbon footprint of their community. Out of the initiative also came the Third Sector Declaration on Climate Change. 252 groups signed the Declaration; recognising the threat that climate change poses to the poorest in the UK and around the world, and committing to tackling that threat.

Over the past year Government Departments have worked alongside the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) to identify Government's suppliers' greenhouse gas emissions and climate change risks. Government spends over £220 billion on goods and services per year and can use this purchasing power to encourage its suppliers to be more sustainable. In 2008, Defra was part of a group of 3 Government Departments that piloted the CDP process with suppliers. In 2009, 13 Government Departments and Executive Agencies, including Defra, joined forces and sent requests for carbon disclosure to over 250 Government suppliers, covering a range of products, services and works. This collaboration has meant that Government spoke with one voice – a stronger voice – which is a powerful way of communicating to suppliers that climate change is a business issue and we expect them to be taking their responsibilities seriously.

We in Defra must ensure that the UK continues to lead by example both domestically and internationally in delivering sustainable development. This Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP) sets out how Defra is putting this vision into practice. We have already made good progress in embedding sustainable development throughout the Department, and we want to build on this to make sure that sustainable development is fully integrated into the way we work and the surroundings we work in.

The world is changing. Defra's success in securing a healthy environment in which we and future generations can prosper will depend on our ability to adapt and grow. Sustainable development must be a central part of every stage of developing and delivering the policies that help us achieve such success. This plan shows us how to do this.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H Benn'.

**Rt. Hon Hilary Benn**  
Secretary of State for  
Environment, Food and Rural Affairs



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Helen Ghosh'.

**Helen Ghosh**  
Permanent Secretary

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# 1 Introduction

Defra's first Sustainable Development Action Plan was published in 2005 to set out how Defra would take forward the commitments of [Securing the Future](#), the UK cross-Government sustainable development strategy. [Our second SDAP \(2007-2009\)](#) used this foundation to make a commitment to embedding sustainable development (SD) at the core of Defra's work and identity.

The Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) praised this commitment in [their assessment of the SDAP](#), but highlighted where work needed to be done to ensure that this vision was achieved. In this, our third SDAP, we want to challenge ourselves to ensure that SD is truly embedded in all that we do.

In our [final report on our last SDAP](#), we reported that we were 'on course' in embedding sustainability across the **four key areas** of:

- Policies
- People
- Operations
- Governance, monitoring and reporting.

In this Action Plan we want to lengthen our stride and report that SD is 'fully integrated' in Defra in 2011, or before. We have set out on the following page exactly what this will mean for Defra across those key areas. To effectively champion SD we must lead by example with sustainability embedded throughout our organisation.

Defra makes a significant contribution to SD through its core business - its **policies** - and this is reflected in our lead on the cross-government Public Service Agreement (PSA) to, '*Secure a healthy natural environment for everyone's well being, health and prosperity, now and in the future*' and via [our contribution](#) to PSA's led by other Government Departments.

Our strategy (shown on page nine) reflects this remit and sets our purpose, underpinned by our priorities and Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSOs). This action plan sets out how we are planning to deliver our DSO on **championing sustainable development** as well as embedding SD across the delivery of all our other DSOs:

- A society that is adapting to the effects of climate change, through a national programme of action and a contribution to international action;
- A healthy, resilient, productive and diverse natural environment;
- Sustainable, low carbon and resource efficient patterns of consumption and production;
- An economy and a society that are resilient to environmental risk;
- A thriving farming and food sector with an improving net environmental impact;
- A sustainable, secure and healthy food supply;
- Socially and economically sustainable rural communities, and
- A respected department delivering efficient and high quality services and outcomes.

Defra's DSOs were modified in October 2008, in light of the creation of the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC). Further detail on this machinery of Government change can be found in the Annex (page 55).

Engaging **people** within Defra is also crucial, so we will ensure that the majority of staff have the knowledge and skills needed to support delivery of the SDAP and sustainable development (SD) generally and are applying these skills to their everyday work. This includes embedding SD in the e-training package for new staff and carrying out a behaviour change programme for existing staff across the Defra Network. Full details for our plans for engaging people are laid out in sections 4.1 and 4.4 (pages 42 and 47-48 respectively). This also means building strong working relationships within the Defra Network, and across all levels of UK Government and internationally. To help to achieve this we will be reviewing and building on our existing networks, such as the SD Research Network and the SD Policy Working Group, and communications tools, such as our e-newsletter [SD Scene](#).

The environment in which we work and the way we manage it (our **operations**) should also be fully sustainable. Our ongoing work towards the [Sustainable Operations on the Government Estate \(SOGE\)](#) targets will be crucial in achieving our aim of truly sustainable operations. This will be achieved in partnership with Interserve, Defra's new Sustainable Workplace Management provider. Our high-level, priority actions on operations are set out in detail in section 4.3 (pages 44-46).

To back up all of these initiatives, we aim to strengthen our **governance, reporting and monitoring**. We have SD embedded in the policy cycle (which ensures that policies align with *Securing the Future*) - now we need to monitor this process to ensure that it is consistently delivering sustainable policy. Laid out in section 6 (page 53-54) are full details of our governance arrangements and future plans.

We are developing tools and knowledge to help us deliver sustainable development objectives through initiatives such as: research on the economics of sustainability and the economic valuation of ecosystems, and investigations into the social impacts of policy, which we will be factoring into our policy cycle and [Stretching the Web](#)<sup>1</sup> tool.

Across these areas and through these initiatives, Defra is striving to improve its performance as a champion of sustainable development. We are committed to working with others across all levels of Government to produce policies that direct the UK towards a more sustainable future<sup>2</sup>, as well as to establishing Defra as a leading sustainable organisation.

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<sup>1</sup> Stretching the web is a tool through which we have embedding SD into our policy cycle: the tool is used to consider the sustainability of policies being developed.

<sup>2</sup> More details on this work can be found in Section 2.1 (Championing Sustainable Development), pages 10-19.

By 2011 we want to report that SD is 'fully integrated' in Defra, so that: staff have the skills to support the delivery of SD, policies are challenged and tested in development to ensure they are sustainable, sustainability is embedded in all areas of our operations and governance, monitoring and reporting mechanisms on the SDAP are robust and cut across the Department.

We face serious global challenges in the future - including soaring demands on food supply and a changing climate - and the scale of our ambition and achievement must match the strength of these challenges. Sustainable development is the solution to these challenges, and we are committed to being a strong, effective and compelling champion of SD.



(Wade)<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Image courtesy of Mike Wade from: <http://www.sxc.hu/photo/1058968>



## Our strategy

### Our purpose

This is why we're here. Defra helps people adapt to the changes involved in building a low-carbon, resource-efficient economy. We deal with environmental risks and work towards securing a sustainable society and a healthy environment.

### Our priorities

These are our main tasks. We need to focus on achieving these through everything we do. We lead for Government on the Public Service Agreement (PSA) on the natural environment.

### Our departmental strategic objectives

These objectives cover all our areas of responsibility and drive our day-to-day work. They are essential to achieving our priorities and fulfilling our purpose.



## Our departmental strategic objectives

Adapting to climate change

A healthy natural environment

Sustainable consumption and production

Addressing environmental risk and emergences

Championing sustainable development

A thriving farming and food sector

A sustainable, secure and healthy food supply

Strong rural communities

A respected department

## Our priorities

Promote a sustainable, low-carbon and resource-efficient economy

Secure a healthy natural environment for us all and deal with environmental risks

Ensure a thriving farming sector and a sustainable, healthy and secure food supply

## Our purpose

To secure a healthy environment in which we and future generations can prosper

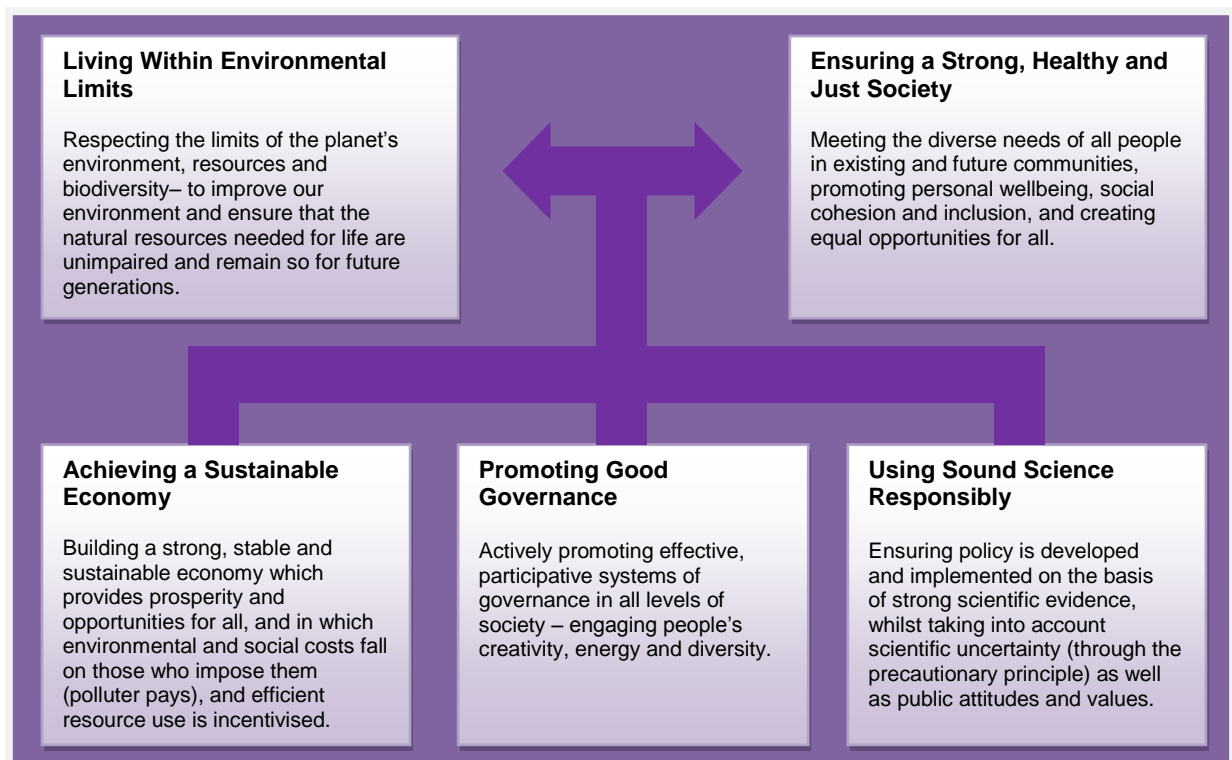
## 2. Sustainable Development and Defra's Strategic Objectives

Defra makes a crucial contribution to sustainable development (SD) through the delivery of our core business - our policies - which are directed by our Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSOs)<sup>4</sup>. The cross-Government Sustainable Development Programme is responsible for championing SD, and we are committed to delivering SD outcomes through our other key programmes. This section describes the ways in which SD is embedded in our strategic objectives, and the key contributions we will make over the life of this plan to SD through delivering these objectives.

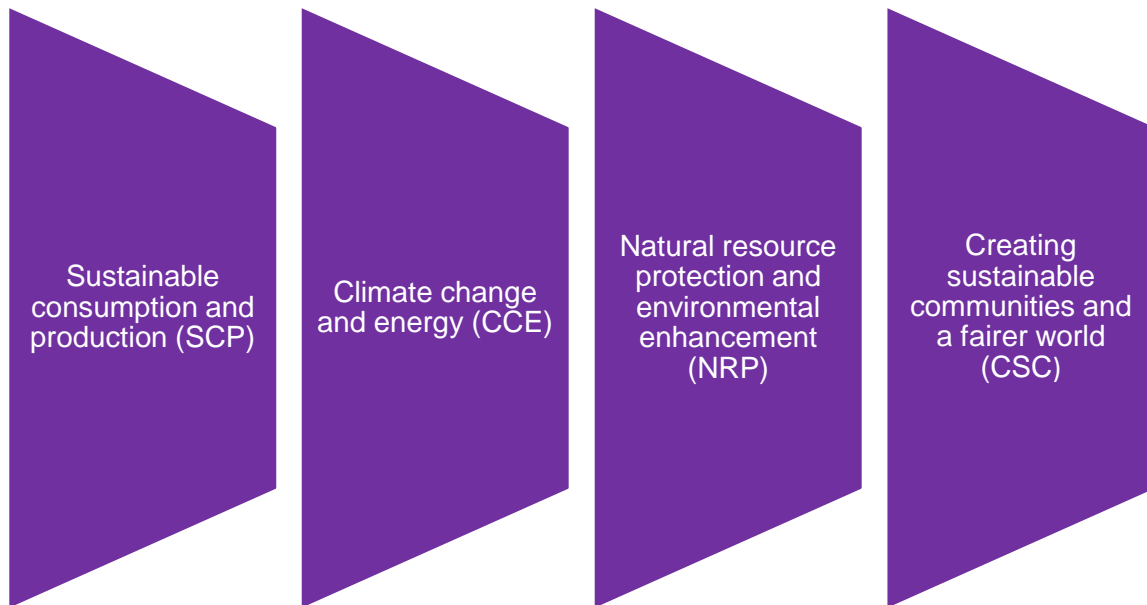
### 2.1 Championing Sustainable Development

Defra leads for government as champion of sustainable development to ensure it is delivered nationally, regionally and locally.

The shared UK principles in [Securing the Future](#), set out below, underpin our efforts to influence all levels of government in order to make progress towards sustainable development and each of the four priorities of the strategy (on the following page).



<sup>4</sup> As Listed in the introduction (page 6)



Under Defra's new structures, we have established the Sustainable Development Programme (SDP) to take forward the cross-Government lead for championing SD as reflected in our Departmental Strategic Objective (DSO). The SDP reports on performance to the cross-government SD Programme Board, which consists of senior SD leads across Government including colleagues in the Devolved Administrations and from the Sustainable Development Commission. The cross-Government SD Programme Board oversees this work and is responsible for ensuring that Departments have the capacity to deliver their commitments arising from the UK sustainable development strategy. The Board's work is supported by the cross-Government SD Policy Working Group which Defra chairs, whose purpose is to build capacity and support delivery of sustainable development outcomes across Government. An internal programme board oversees the detailed work programme of the SD programme.

The SD Programme agreed, with other government departments, a set of cross-Government Public Service Agreement (PSA) and DSO indicators which represent key areas of opportunity and risk for sustainable development and together will help indicate the Government's progress on SD. The indicator set is designed to track government performance on SD and show up opportunities and challenges for better joined-up action on Government priorities where SD thinking and governance groups could add value. Defra is in the process of analysing the effectiveness and rigour of these indicators and, in conjunction with the cross-Government SD Programme Board, will act on recommendations coming out of this review. As champion of SD, it is important that Defra not only monitor progress across Government on SD but also the efficacy of our tools for measuring progress.

UK progress toward sustainable development is measured annually through the Defra publication [Sustainable Development Indicators in Your Pocket](#), which reviews progress on the 68 indicators on sustainable development set out in *Securing the Future*.

[The latest set](#) was published on 30 July and show improvement across a wide range of measures including: carbon dioxide emissions from domestic energy use, farming management, crime, mortality rates and rough sleepers. Defra will continue to produce and widely disseminate this document.

Strategic communications and engagement are key to our work on championing SD. We are reviewing our strategic communications to ensure that they are effective and making a full contribution to our SD objectives. In particular, we are reviewing (with a view to improving) [SD Scene](#), the bi-monthly e-newsletter produced by the SD Programme to cover the latest developments on SD.

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF <sup>5</sup> priority area(s)
1	Review and improve <i>SD Scene</i> . This work forms part of our wider review of the SD Programme's strategic communications.	December 2009	Director, Strategy & Sustainable Development (SSD)	SCP

Defra chairs the cross-Government SD Policy Working Group to build capacity and support delivery of sustainable development outcomes across Government. Defra also sponsors the [Sustainable Development Commission](#), the Government's independent watchdog on sustainable development.

### **Championing SD at home**

Defra's champion role means working with other government departments and organisations at regional and local level. Key partner departments are the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), Department for Transport (DfT) and Communities and Local Government (CLG). A particular focus over the coming years is on the new single regional strategies, working to embed SD into the local government performance framework and working to ensure that planning and housing policies take us toward more sustainable outcomes. We also lead on making sure the Olympic legacy action plan commitment to make the Olympic Park a blueprint for sustainable living is fulfilled.

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
2	Work with CLG to ensure that <a href="#">PSA20 (Housing)</a> is delivered in ways that protect the natural environment and promote sustainable development.	2009-2011	Director, SSD	SCP, NRP, CSC
3	Work with CLG and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) to positively influence the emerging Single Regional Strategies and ensure they contribute to social inclusion, respect environmental limits and maximise the contribution of the natural environment to the economy (e.g. ecosystem services, green jobs).	2009-2011	Director, SSD	SCP, NRP, CSC

<sup>5</sup> StF- *Securing the Future*, the UK Government's SD Strategy. This column shows the priority area or areas in StF (see page 11) to which the action relates.



Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
4	Work with CLG, IDeA, Government Offices (GOs) and the Audit Commission to ensure <a href="#">Sustainable Community Strategies</a> are 'refreshed' and delivered in a way that contributes to sustainable development in the UK.	2009-2011	Director, SSD	CSC
5	Work with CLG, DfT and other Departments to ensure that planning and transport policy (including policy on planning reform for nationally significant infrastructure) contributes towards sustainable development.	2009-2011	Director, SSD	CCE, NRP,
6	Produce a prospectus of 2012 related activity on how we will use the 2012 Olympics to inspire sustainable living. Supported by strategic communications activities and planning.	Autumn 2009	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC

### **Case Study: Using the 2012 Games to inspire sustainable living**

The ambition of the London 2012 Olympic Games is not just to embed sustainable development into the heart of the construction and staging of the Games but also – as promised in the [Government's Legacy Action Plan](#) - to use the Games to inspire sustainable living across the UK.

Through working with our Olympic partners, local authorities, the third sector, business, and our own delivery network, we will lead on a programme of activity to reach out to individuals and communities in the UK to achieve more sustainable lifestyles.

Defra's oversight of delivery of the targets for Sustainable Operations on the Government Estate (SOGE) is now largely within the remit of the newly established [Centre of Expertise in Sustainable Procurement](#) (CESP) which is part of the Office of Government Commerce and which reports to the Government's Chief Sustainability Officer. Defra retains policy lead for sustainable public procurement, including updating the [Buy Sustainable – Quick Wins](#) products standards. We work closely with CESP to ensure that our sustainability standards fit with CESP's lead on delivery, and collaborative procurement.

Most of our budget for sustainable operations work was transferred to CESP and we sit on the CESP programme board. These changes reflect the recommendations of the Sustainable Procurement Task Force and a report we commissioned on how to make progress in government, and these institutional changes have been welcomed by the SDC. Defra retains overall lead policy on the targets for the government estate and, working closely with DECC, DfT and CESP, we will be working to set new targets which are aligned with government's sustainable development objectives and at a level that demonstrates leadership<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> Action 7 (on the following page) refers to this

Defra recognises that, as mentioned by the Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) in [their assessment of our 2007-2009 SDAP](#), we need to work with the rest of Government to develop better management information on the Government's operational footprint. This year we are working with Departments to ensure they have a snapshot of their procurement footprint, using input-output modelling based on overall spend. We hope this will help Departments better understand the areas of most significant impact, and will support action to reduce those impacts through the supply chain.

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
7	Work to agree a framework of targets and measures for sustainable procurement and operations.	Early 2010	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC

Defra also works closely with the Third Sector and has recently convened a [Ministerial Taskforce on Climate Change, the Environment and Sustainable Development](#) involving DECC, CLG and the Office of the Third Sector. In addition we are making sure we learn the lessons from the evaluation of the [Every Action Counts](#) (EAC) programme set up as a result of Securing the Future.

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
8	Evaluate and learn from the lessons of the EAC initiative. These lessons will be fed into future activity with the Third Sector targeting the general public.	Ongoing	Director, SSD	CSC
9	Publish agreed actions from the Ministerial Task Force on Climate Change, the Environment and Sustainable Development.	November 2009	Director, SSD	CCE, NRP
10	Run event with the Ministerial task force on the role of the Third Sector in sustainable development	Late 2009/ early 2010	Director, SSD	CCE, NRP,

The SDC, which we sponsor, plays an important role; advising Government on SD policy, serving as a watchdog of government progress and as critical friend to build the capacity and capability of the government to operate within the principles of sustainable development. The SDC has recently changed status from advisory to executive Non-Departmental Public Body and Will Day has been appointed as Chair. A priority over the next year is to work closely with the new Chair to put the SDC in a position to build on the legacy of the outgoing chair, Jonathon Porritt, and help the government make further progress on SD.

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
11	Work with the new SDC Chair on the new work programme and how to make the SDC more effective going forwards.	March 2010	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC

### **Championing SD internationally**

This role in championing extends to the international area where we work with the Department for International Development (DfID) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and lead on the [Sustainable Development Dialogues](#) (SDDs) with the 'plus five' emerging partners - China, India, Brazil, South Africa and Mexico - to share experience and knowledge. The SDDs focus on areas for sustainable development (SD) which reflect country and both fund specific projects as well as provide a forum for high level policy exchanges and more in depth working level visits.

It is important to ensure international policies more generally contribute to SD. A review of Defra's international priorities requested by the Management Board is looking at how we can do this more effectively going forward. Important issues are: making progress on forestry to deliver both climate change and biodiversity benefits, ensuring that the needed expansion of agricultural production is undertaken in an environmentally sustainable way and that international trade contributes to SD. Defra is a delivery partner for DfID's Public Service Agreement ([number 29](#)) on international poverty reduction. Defra also leads for government on the EU SD strategy which is currently under review.

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
12	Use the <a href="#">EU Sustainable Development Strategy</a> (EU SDS) to promote SD and to take forward UK SD priorities via the European Council conclusions (due December 2009).	Ongoing from December 2009	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC
13	Work with China, India, Brazil, Mexico and South Africa through the SDDs to mainstream SD into policymaking processes by sharing knowledge, expertise and best practice.	March 2011	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC
14	Work with Indonesia (in partnership with DECC and other Departments) to deliver commitments in the Memorandum of Understanding on Environment and Climate Change signed in December 2008. This will particularly focus on progressing sustainable consumption and production of Palm Oil.	Ongoing	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP
15	Work with DFID/BIS Trade Policy Unit to ensure that our objectives for SD are integrated into regional and multilateral trade negotiations. Specifically, aim to agree a list of environmental goods and services to qualify for trade liberalisation and strengthening the <a href="#">Sustainability Impact Assessment</a> process.	2010	Director, SSD	SCP, NRP, CCE, CSC
16	Continue to work (in conjunction with other	Ongoing	Director,	NRP,

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
	government departments including DfID) to contribute to efforts to achieve the <a href="#">Millennium Development Goals</a> , including MDG 1 on reducing hunger and poverty and MDG 7 on ensuring environmental sustainability – and in so doing contribute to a sustainable basis for future global food production.	(2015 target)	SSD	SCP, CSC
17	Provide input on the key themes of the UN Commission for Sustainable Development 2010-2011 work programme (CSD-18 cycle) on waste management, chemicals, mining, sustainable consumption and production, and transport.	2010-2011	Director, SSD	NRP, SCP

We are working closely with DfT and DECC on the UK's policy, which aims to enable **biofuels** to contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in a socially, environmentally and economically sustainable manner. The following actions contribute to this aim:

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
18	Work through the <a href="#">Global Bioenergy Partnership</a> (and in partnership with the Departments listed above) to agree voluntary sustainability criteria for the production of bioenergy. The aim is to ensure that the international biofuels industry develops in a sustainable way.	Ongoing	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP
19	Implement the EU's Renewable Energy Directive (RED) which stipulates sustainability criteria for domestic and imported biofuels. Working to inform the European Commission's 2010 report on how to address indirect land use change impacts in the context of RED.	Ongoing	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP
20	Identify research gaps and develop a research strategy in order to fill these gaps. This will be carried out by the newly established Biofuels Research Steering Group (co-chaired by the DfT/ BIS and Defra Chief Scientific Advisors).	Ongoing	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP
21	Contribute to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the UK's 2010 National Action Plan (a requirement under the Renewable Energy Directive which will set out our national renewable energy targets and how we aim to achieve them), and</li> <li>the review of the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation,</li> </ul> in order to ensure that we achieve our targets in a sustainable way.	Ongoing	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP



We will continue to work to **tackle deforestation and promote sustainable forest management** through the following actions. Defra is also using its power as a procurer to promote sustainable timber - see pages 50-51 for further information.

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
22	Take forward a number of actions agreed under the 2003 Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan, including: implementation of a scheme to verify legal timber from partner countries, the FLEGT licensing scheme, and development of a new European framework to tackle the entry of illegal timber onto the EU market, i.e. the Due Diligence Regulation.	2009-2010	Director, SSD	NRP, SCP, CCE
23	Continue to seek alignment of the Timber procurement policy across Europe, by encouraging other EU Member states to adopt a public procurement policy for timber if they do not have one, and encouraging those that do to implement minimum requirements in this policy.	2009-2010	Director, SSD	NRP, SCP, CCE
24	Work to promote the consideration of sustainable forest management criteria in bilateral international trade agreements, and in the SDDs workplans.	2009-2010	Director, SSD	NRP, SCP, CCE

### **Building capacity**

These specific actions need to be backed up by a wider effort to build capacity to apply SD principles in practice. This is widely seen as the biggest barrier to progress.

The [Sustainable Development Research Network \(SDRN\)](#) is an initiative funded by Defra and DfT, and coordinated by the Policy Studies Institute in London. SDRN aims to encourage the better use of evidence and research in policy-making and to champion SD in research and academic circles. Membership of the network is free and open to all. As the SDRN contract comes up for renewal we need to establish whether it still serves a useful purpose and how it might need to change going forward based on the views of stakeholders.

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
25	Review the SDRN to determine: a) whether an SD network of this type is useful b) how the network should continue	a) November 2009 b) February 2010	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC

In order to integrate SD into policy making, economic, social and environmental impacts need to be understood and integrated into policy making tools. A cross-Whitehall group of analysts, led by Defra's Chief Economist, is conducting an economics-focused review of the literature around the appraisal of policies against SD criteria.

The review will report this autumn and aims to provide an economic framework for analysing the sustainability of policy, with a view to taking better policy decisions. The review will ask whether current practice, following guidance in the [Green Book](#), can be relied upon to ensure we achieve SD goals, or whether additional guidance is necessary. It will also explore how to balance SD objectives with other priorities, if trade-offs emerge.

This work builds on earlier work: in December 2007, alongside the [Ecosystems Approach Action Plan](#), Defra published "[An introductory guide to valuing ecosystem services](#)". The importance of using ecosystem services as a framework is that it covers a much wider range of potential impacts on the natural environment and provides an opportunity to think more systematically about all the services involved.

Defra, in partnership with the Environment Agency, Natural England and the Forestry Commission, is currently taking forward a number of further actions in relation to valuing ecosystem services including work on benefits transfer, which seeks to improve the use of existing valuation evidence in policy appraisal where appropriate. Defra is expecting to publish guidelines on benefits transfer along with a number of worked case study examples in autumn 2009.

Defra is also reviewing existing policy and project appraisal tools to explore how the principles of an ecosystems approach, including the valuation of ecosystem services, could be incorporated further and hopes to report back on progress in 2009. Finally, work is soon to be commissioned to produce guidelines on use of non-economic and participatory valuation methods to complement use of economic valuation in policy appraisal.

Internationally, Defra is supporting the global study taking place under the auspices of the European Commission and the United Nations Environment Programme on The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) led by Pavan Sukhdev of Deutsche Bank. This is aiming to help decision makers across the world to understand the economic value of biodiversity and ecosystem services, and to integrate them into their economic planning processes. The study aims to be an input into next year's Tenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Defra is coordinating on this and workstreams under other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (including the Convention on International trade in Endangered Species, the Convention on Migratory Species and Ramsar<sup>7</sup>) to embed the principles of valuing ecosystem services, recognising in particular their value to poor people in developing countries, working with other Government Departments as appropriate.

Defra is also taking the lead in preparing the ground globally for the agreement in 2010 of a successor to the 2010 Biodiversity Target which, set at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, aimed to secure a significant reduction in the rate of biodiversity loss as a contribution to poverty reduction and to the benefit of all life on earth.

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<sup>7</sup> The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl habitats (signed in Ramsar, Iran)

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
26	Agree, with other Government Department partners, actions to contribute to better understanding of sustainability impacts in policy appraisal.	November 2009	Chief Economist	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC

The economics of sustainability work has identified a gap around the understanding and valuation of social capital. The Strategy Unit in Defra has conducted an internal investigation into the **social impacts of policy**, informed by an evidence call from the SDRN. That is designed to help policy makers here take better account of social impacts (and work in conjunction with deeper understanding of customer insight) but we will also look for opportunities to draw on existing knowledge across government.

### Measuring our own performance

Defra's success in championing SD across government, across the UK and internationally is measured by our Departmental Strategic Objective (DSO) of the same name. This is supported by two Intermediate Outcomes with underpinning indicators which aim to ensure that policy and delivery at all levels of Government observe the five principles of SD. The indicators include measuring Government's performance as a whole against the Sustainable Operations on the Government Estate (SOGES) targets and SDAPs and a stakeholder survey to judge views of our success throughout the UK and internationally. The survey is currently underway and we will use the results to develop our forward work programme and to provide a baseline for measuring our success in the future. We are in the process of strengthening the indicators for this DSO to ensure they reflect Defra's remit and provide robust measures for the future.

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
27	Conduct a survey to measure Defra's performance on championing sustainable development, and to identify ways in which performance could be improved. Results will be fed into audience insight analysis and programme development in the SD Programme.	October 2009 (survey results) Ongoing (audience insight work)	Director, SSD	SCP, NRP, CCE, CSC

Championing Sustainable Development is a discrete DSO, but we need to ensure that all our other DSOs contribute to SD, which all work together to deliver Defra's purpose- *to secure a healthy environment in which we and future generations can prosper*. The following sections (up to 2.9) show some of the ways in which our varied DSOs are contributing to SD.

## 2.2 Adapting to Climate Change

The Government's [Adapting to Climate Change \(ACC\) Programme](#) is co-ordinating and driving forward work across Government on adaptation to climate change in England. The Programme is being taken forward in two phases. Phase 1 (2008-2011) will lay the groundwork necessary to implement Phase 2: a statutory National Adaptation Programme, as required by the Climate Change Act.

In many ways, adapting to climate change can be seen as a specific sub-section of sustainable development (SD). The objectives of the policy are to enable SD in all areas of society, economy and environment, in the light of a particular risk to achieving that – the risk of a changing climate.

The Programme launched the document "[Adapting to Climate Change in England: a Framework for Action](#)" in July 2008. This document explained how the Programme is governed by the five principles of sustainable development:

### **Living within environmental limits**

- *To ensure any actions taken consider natural resources, biodiversity and whole ecosystems, and improve or enhance them wherever possible*
- *Adaptation measures must not be carbon or energy intensive, but rely on more low-carbon, energy efficient and resource efficient technologies*

### **Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society**

- *Place the wellbeing and health of people at the centre of adapting to climate change*
- *Make sure that adaptation measures do not disproportionately affect any particular group*

### **Achieving a sustainable economy**

- *Give businesses and organisations the information they need to adapt effectively, maximising opportunities and reducing threats*

### **Promoting good governance**

- *Including empowering communities to influence adaptation and take appropriate action for themselves*

### **Using sound science responsibly**

- *To allow for flexibility and reflect the inherent uncertainty in planning for future climate change - scenarios are not predictions, and they will be affected by other uncertain events*



Phase 1 of the Programme has four work streams:

- Develop a more robust and comprehensive evidence base about the impacts and consequences of climate change on the UK;
- Raise awareness of the need to take action now and help others to take action;
- Measure success and take steps to ensure effective delivery; and
- Work across Government at the national, regional and local level to embed adaptation into Government policies, programme and systems.

The Programme will be working to ensure that **sustainable adaptation is promoted and delivered** at all levels of government with the principles set out above, consistently applied to the four work streams. Specific actions relating to this plan are:

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
28	Further develop the explanation of 'Sustainable Adaptation', and provide supporting materials that can be used in a practical way.	End 2009	Director, ACC Programme	CCE, CSC
29	Develop options for inclusion of Adaptation target in the revised framework for <a href="#">Sustainable Operations on the Government Estate (SOGE)</a> .	By November 2009	Director, ACC Programme	CCE

The [UK Climate Projections](#) have been created to help the UK to plan for a changing climate. The Projections contain information on observed and future climate change, based on the latest scientific understanding. The programme has held a Ministerial seminar on adaptation, to help raise awareness of the latest UK Climate Projections and to generate further ideas for joint action. We will be following this with the [Projections in Practice programme](#) - events on Adapting to Climate Change, the UK Climate Projections and how to use them.

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
30	Deliver all national sector specific events and week-long region events in the Projections in Practice programme.	April 2010	Director, ACC Programme	CCE

It is also crucial that Defra considers **adaptation on its estate**. Climate change will potentially impact on the Defra Estate, for example, through the increased risk of flooding and higher temperatures in buildings. Whilst Defra needs to continue to manage its Estate and business operations to mitigate the contribution to climate change, the Department also needs to consider the resilience of its Estate to adapt to these potential changes. Defra Estates is responding now to known information and projections to deliver a more sustainable and resilient workplace in the medium to long term, for example, improving space utilisation to support more flexible working practices. Defra is also placing greater awareness on securing "green leases" through adoption of the [Better Buildings Partnership](#) environmental memorandum of understanding or engaging landlords to secure a more sustainable Estate.

By adopting this approach Defra will be better placed to address the impacts of anticipated climate change and deliver a more resilient estate within a realistic investment funding profile.

No.	Actions	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
31	Develop a climate change impacts risk assessment methodology to help identify and act on the risks from climate change to the Defra Estate, and apply this to Defra's London, York and Bristol sites.	Development by March 2010, application by March 2011	Head, Estates	CCE

### Case study: An example of sustainable adaptation

[Helen and James Hague](#) from Hampshire are part of the Farming Futures project and manage a 130 hectare farm dedicated to dairy production. They are already seeing the effects of climate change with a trend towards hotter summers reducing the availability of grass and increasing the need for buffer feeding, whilst wetter winters force earlier winter housing of the herd and put pressure on the slurry storage system.

To adapt to these changes and reduce their farm's carbon 'hoof-print', they have reduced their reliance on imported maize feed by growing drought resistant deep rooting hybrid ryegrasses. This hybrid ryegrass also reduces the need for cultivation and, due to its deep rooting, the risk of soil erosion. There are also thought to be additional health benefits for both animal and customer from using a grass based rather than cereal based diet. To manage the pressure on their slurry storage Helen and James are looking at the possibility of investing in an anaerobic digestion system. This system would also help to reduce their herd's methane emissions and cut electricity bills.

All Government Departments are committed to publishing their plans to adapt to climate change and meet their Departmental carbon budgets by spring 2010. Defra aims to publish its **Climate Change Plan** by spring 2010. The development of Defra's adaptation plan will be a two-step process: identifying and agreeing Defra's high-level risks and priorities, and then identifying actions based on those high-level risks. Defra is currently developing policies to deliver the emissions reductions in agriculture and waste that were identified in the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan in July 2009, along with a set of indicators to measure progress towards these goals. Once the Climate Change Plan has been published, this SDAP will be reviewed to ensure co-ordination between the plans.

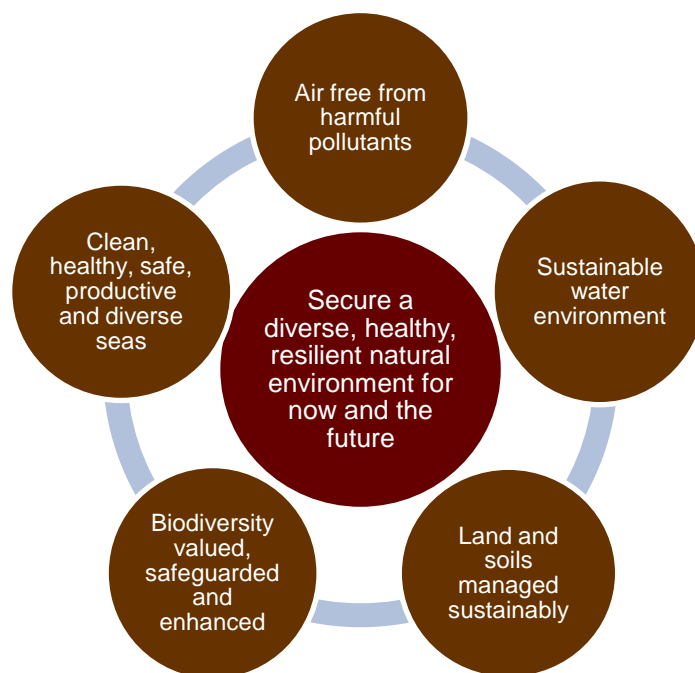
No.	Actions	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
32	Publish Defra's Climate Change Plan, covering how Defra will reduce greenhouse gas emissions including in the UK agriculture and waste sectors (identified in the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan) and how the Department is adapting itself and its policies to the impacts of climate change.	Spring 2010	Director, ACC & CCM Programmes	CCE

## 2.3 A Healthy Natural Environment

Defra is the lead department for the cross-government Public Service Agreement (PSA) on the natural environment. Our vision is to secure a diverse, healthy and resilient natural environment, which provides the basis for everyone's well-being, health and prosperity now and in the future; and where the value of the services provided by the natural environment are reflected in decision-making. It wants to see:

- The air that people breathe free from harmful levels of pollutants;
- Sustainable water use which balances water quality, environment, supply and demand;
- Land and soils managed sustainably;
- Biodiversity valued, safeguarded and enhanced;
- Sustainable, living landscapes with best features conserved;
- Clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas; and
- People enjoying, understanding and caring for the natural environment.

Within that framework, we have five key indicators to determine our progress towards achieving the vision of the PSA.



The PSA is delivered through a number of programmes within Defra, as well as through actions taken by a range of delivery partners<sup>8</sup>. Commitment to action in relation to the PSA is captured in the [Delivery Agreement](#).

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<sup>8</sup> Such as the Department of Communities and Local Government, the Department for Climate Change and Energy, the Department for Business Innovation and Skills, the Environment Agency, Natural England and the Forestry Commission

In delivering the Natural Environment Public Service Agreement (PSA), all delivery partners are using the full range of sustainable development principles. The overarching purpose of the PSA is to ensure that we are able to live within environmental limits. Decisions relating to the delivery of the PSA are underpinned by a sound evidence base. The successful delivery of the PSA will also ensure that citizens enjoy a just society and that the resources that underpin a sustainable economy are in place. Action is taken at the appropriate level (whether that is at the national, regional and local level) by parties who rightly have the responsibility and ownership of delivery, meaning that delivery of the PSA has appropriate governance in place.

### **Case study: Green Infrastructure**

‘Green Infrastructure’ is a planned network of green spaces and other environmental features. Defra believes that it should be considered alongside other types of infrastructure (transport networks and utilities) in planning. It provides social, economic and environmental benefits for people who live and work close to Green Infrastructure developments:

- Outdoor relaxation and play;
- Wildlife habitat and access to nature;
- Environmental education; and
- Improved health and well-being.

Natural England has produced good practice guidance on how to effectively plan Green Infrastructure. This type of approach has been put into practice around the country through local and regional partnerships. For example, in the North West the [‘St. Helens Countryside In and Around Town Planning’](#) project has made a valuable start in considering how the urban fringe can become a resource for local communities.

As such, Green Infrastructure helps deliver the vision of the Natural Environment PSA and exemplifies the principles of sustainable development.

In light of the many pressures on the natural environment, and the fact that the challenges we face are becoming more complex, to achieve the vision set out in the natural environment PSA, we recognise the need to continue to improve the effectiveness of our policy-making and delivery. It is in this context that Defra launched [“Securing a healthy natural environment: An action plan for embedding an ecosystems approach”](#) at the end of 2007, fulfilling a commitment in the UK Sustainable Development Strategy. This plan is intended to form the basis for a more strategic approach to policy-making and delivery on the natural environment, reflecting the latest thinking among scientists and policy-makers, both domestically and internationally.



Essentially, this approach is about **adopting a new way of thinking and working**, by:

- Shifting the focus of our policy-making and delivery away from looking at natural environment policies in separate ‘silos’ – e.g. air, water, soil, biodiversity – and towards a more holistic or integrated approach based on whole ecosystems; and
- Seeking to ensure that the value of ecosystem services is fully reflected in policy- and decision-making in Defra and across Government at all levels.

Defra worked with many of our key partners and stakeholders, including our delivery network and other Government Departments, to identify and agree a number of actions to help us move collectively towards an ecosystems approach to conserving, managing and enhancing the natural environment in England.

**Progress to date with these actions has helped:**

- Promote joined-up working within Defra and the Defra network to deliver environmental outcomes more effectively;
- Identify opportunities for mainstreaming an ecosystems approach;
- Demonstrate the benefits of taking an ecosystems approach through case studies; and
- Develop a robust evidence base and further tools for valuing ecosystem services.

An update of all of the actions is available on the [Defra Website](#).

We recognise the need to go further in embedding this approach into policy and decision making at all levels of government, and will continue to develop practical tools and advice for embedding this approach in the wide variety of decision, policy and strategy making situations that have an impact on achieving our Natural Environment goals.

Some of the actions contributing to the delivery of our DSO objectives are included below.

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
33	Develop and deliver a conservation volunteering campaign to encourage the general public to actively participate in conservation volunteering.	Various phases through financial years 2009-2011	Head/deputy head of Campaigns and Marketing/ SCA for environment and rural (Defra)	NRP
34	Deliver agri-environment and forestry schemes under axis 2 of the <a href="#">Rural Development Programme for England</a> (RDPE).	Current RDPE runs until 2013	Director, Wildlife and Countryside	NRP

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
	These contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of important landscapes, protection of the historic environment, sustainability of priority habitats and species, promotion of public access and understanding of the countryside, and resource protection, with secondary objectives for flood management and conservation of genetic resources where they contribute to primary objectives.			
35	Carry out a review of social and economic impacts of the RDPE to better understand the potential impacts of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform on rural communities in England, and to inform future policy development. This will be feeding into ongoing policy development and EU negotiations leading up to 2013.	Ongoing to 2013	Director, Rural Programme	CSC
36	Undertake an economic investigation of the non-market benefits and the incidental social and economic benefits resulting from <a href="#">Environmental Stewardship</a> .	March 2010	Director, Wildlife and Countryside	CSC
37	Give powers to the new Marine Management Organisation (MMO) to manage activities to contribute to sustainable development in the UK marine area.	Spring 2010	Director, Marine Programme	NRP, SCP
38	Complete marine policy statement including policies and priorities for the MMO in planning the marine area to achieve sustainable development.	Spring 2011	Director, Marine Programme	NRP, SCP
39	Remove various exemptions from water abstraction license control through the abstraction licensing system. Currently some forms of irrigation and quarry dewatering in areas of England and Wales are exempt from license control. Ending these exemptions will enhance the Agency's ability to manage our water resources, balancing needs of business, society and the environment.	November 2009	Director, Water	NRP
40	Make changes to abstraction regimes, to protect designated conservation sites through the Environment Agency's Restoring sustainable Abstraction. This will entail changes to abstraction licences held by abstractors, including water companies.	Ongoing to 2015	Director, Water / Environment Agency	NRP
41	Water companies to publish their water resource management plans. All water companies have water resource management plans which look ahead 25 years and include projections of current and future demands for water. They set out how water will be supplied with acceptable environmental impacts.	April 2010	Director of Water	NRP, SCP
42	Publish <a href="#">River Basin Management Plans</a> .	December 2009	Director of Water	NRP, CCE

## 2.4 Sustainable Consumption and Production

The [Sustainable Consumption and Production \(SCP\) Programme](#) is working to reduce the sustainability impacts of UK economic activity, while maintaining or improving economic output and standards of living. The programme addresses environmental impacts and social where these are relevant.

The programme focuses on the following areas of activity:

- Encouraging business to produce, market and use more sustainable products and services;
- Encouraging consumer demand for sustainable goods and services, and reducing the sustainability impacts of household consumption;
- Increasing the resource efficiency of business operations and processes;
- Leading by example through sustainable public procurement; and
- Preventing, reducing and recycling waste, and reducing landfill.<sup>9</sup>

Consistent with the approach of [Securing the Future](#), the programme sets out to help people make better choices, and demonstrate Government leadership, in the following ways:

- A. **Encouraging and enabling best practice** by providing the tools, guidance and information to help businesses and consumers choose the most sustainable behaviours. This includes the following activities.

### Background: Product Roadmap Action Plans

[Product Roadmap](#) Action Plans (jointly owned by industry and Government) are being developed to encourage participating business to identify and address the environmental and social impacts associated with ten high impact product areas. The [Milk](#) and [Clothing](#) Action Plans were published in 2009. The clothing action plan is featured in our case study on page 31.

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
43	Publish the following action plans in 2010: Plasterboard, WCs, sewage motors, window systems, domestic lighting, TVs, fish and shellfish, passenger cars.	July-December 2010	Director, Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP)	SCP
44	Build on the Act on C02 campaign to drive awareness and behaviour change amongst the public, business and government employees around sustainable living.	Various phases through financial years 2009-2011	Director, Communications & Head of Campaigns and Marketing (Defra and DECC)	SCP CCE CSC

<sup>9</sup> Managed through the Waste Programme, but fully integrated with SCP.

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
45	Secure more sustainable lifestyles by funding 8 projects working with Third Sector delivery partners through the <a href="#">Greener Living Fund</a> (GLF). Projects work with individuals and communities to encourage changes in behaviour. The GLF was launched in June 2009.	Ongoing from June 2009	Director, SCP	SCP
46	Continue to develop Defra's evidence base on sustainable behaviours, assessing people's current behaviours, the potential for further action, the motivations and barriers to change, and what will best achieve change at a household level. Research also includes piloting and testing innovative approaches to encourage pro-environmental behaviour.	Ongoing	Director, SCP	SCP

B. **Government setting an example** by establishing overarching policy approaches and ensuring that the Government acts in a sustainable way. This includes developing frameworks for the sustainable procurement of products by the public sector.

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area
47	Develop a broad evidence base and policy approach to inform frameworks for the sustainable procurement of products by the public sector. Update Government's sustainable procurement guide <i>Think Sustainable, Quick Wins</i> .	December 2010	Director, SCP	SCP

C. **Raising standards** of sustainability in goods and services through regulation and guidance to ensure that product groups adhere to minimum standards. The procurement theme above complements this approach by encouraging best practice, including actions to:

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
48	Publish guidance on the corporate reporting of greenhouse gas emissions.	October 2009	Director, SCP	SCP, CCE
49	Minimum energy performance and labelling standards are being developed in Europe, which will achieve at least 7MtCO <sub>2</sub> savings per year by 2020 and annual savings on consumer energy bills worth £900M/year.  Products covered include: Fridges (household and commercial), freezers, washing machines, dishwashers, tumble dryers; domestic, commercial and street lighting; TVs, set-top boxes; chargers (e.g. phone); motors, circulators, fans; solid fuel burners, boilers, water heaters; desktop and laptop ICT, monitors and imaging equipment.	Completed by end 2010	Director, SCP	SCP, CCE

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
	Voluntary initiative (VI) on domestic lighting.	November 09		
	VI on data centres Code of Conduct (saving UK 4.7MtCO2 and £900M over 6 years).	July 09		

D. Preventing, reducing and recycling **waste**, and reducing landfill:

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
50	Consult on implementing the waste framework directive. Policy issues currently under consideration include the implementation of a range of provisions and targets on the re-use, recycling and collection of waste.	December 2010	Director, Waste	SCP
51	Publish a policy statement on Commercial and Industrial (C&I) Waste which sets out the Government's vision for future action. This will include proposals for how local authorities and waste management companies can help businesses to improve the ways they deal with this waste. A national survey of C&I waste arising in England, due to be completed by the end of 2010, will collate the data necessary to inform the setting, and monitoring, of any future targets.	Autumn 2009	Director, Waste	SCP
52	Undertake research to assess the case for introducing further restrictions on the landfilling of biodegradable wastes and recyclable materials. Defra aims to consult on options by the end of this year. This is part of Government's wider commitment to continuing to reduce our reliance on landfill and minimising the impact landfill has on the environment.	January 2010	Director, Waste	SCP, NRP
53	Defra's <a href="#">Anaerobic Digestion</a> (AD) Task Group to develop an Implementation Plan which will set out the practical measures that Government and stakeholders will take individually and collectively to drive a major increase in the use of AD. AD is a proven renewable energy and waste management technology. See action number 65 (page 33) for the delivery of the implementation plan.	Ongoing	Director, Waste	SCP, CCE
54	Continue to implement the EU Batteries and Accumulators Directive by appointing an enforcement body to ensure that distributors are meeting their obligations to collect used household batteries. Defra will be monitoring progress to see how the implementation is working in practice.	Ongoing	Director, Waste	SCP
55	Continue to provide support to local authority teams procuring and constructing infrastructure to treat residual municipal waste, with a view to meeting EU landfill diversion targets for 2013 and 2020.	Ongoing	Director, Waste	SCP



Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
56	Work to develop markets for off-take of solid recovered fuel (SRF) produced by Mechanical & Biological Treatment plants. A new grant scheme for the years 2010/13 will encourage industrial heat users to modify systems to burn SRF rather than fossil fuel.	Ongoing	Director, Waste	SCP, CCE
57	Support work on waste targets through planned communications campaign activity for 09/10 including: a second phase of the <a href="#">‘get a bag habit’</a> campaign, a second phase of the <a href="#">‘Saving Money, it’s your Business’</a> campaign, a new focus for <a href="#">Recycle Now</a> , continuation of WRAP’s <a href="#">Love Food Hate Waste</a> and composting campaigns, and a public information campaign on recycling batteries (end 2009).	Ongoing	Director, Waste	SCP, CSC

The five principles of SD are implicit to the work of the programme. Assurance of the application of the five principles in the programme will be delivered through the following actions:

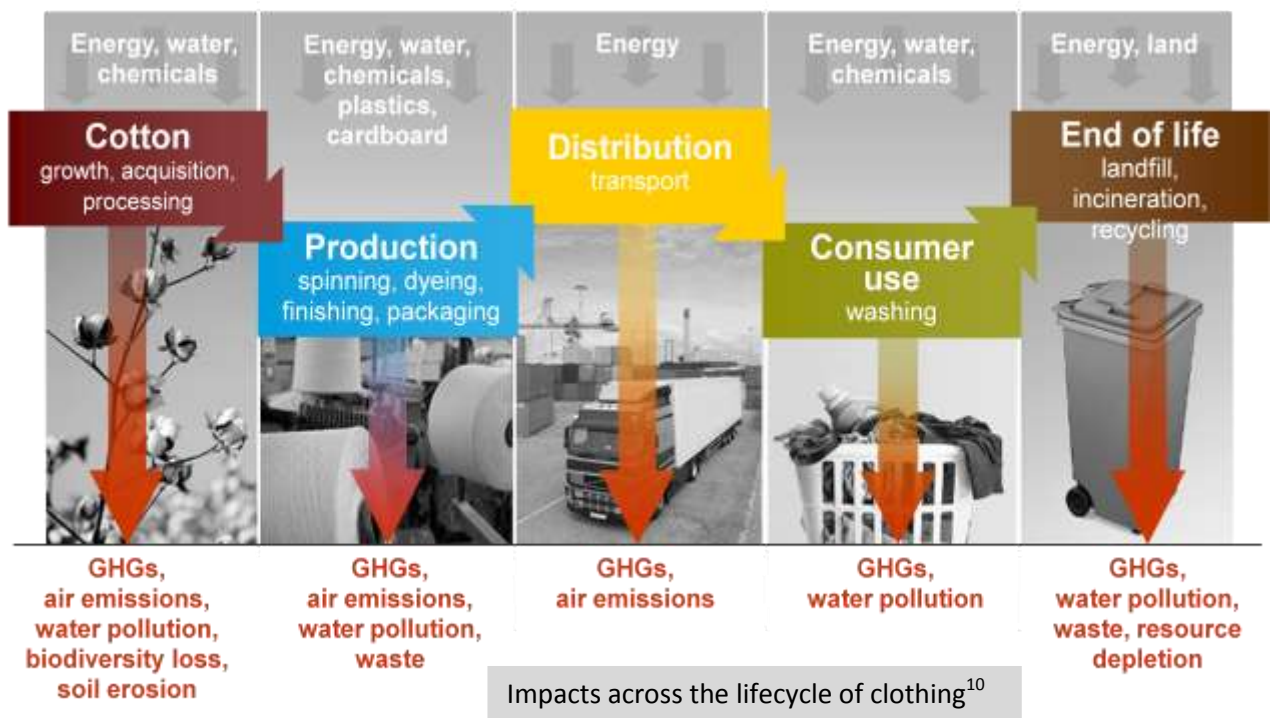
Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
58	Factor the five principles of SD into the further elaboration of SCP Programme outcomes.	Ongoing	Director, SCP	SCP
59	Raise awareness within the programme of the <a href="#">Stretching the Web</a> tool and its application.	November 2009	Director, SCP	SCP
60	Continue to assess all elements of sustainability in our Product Roadmap pilots, ensuring social impacts are addressed where relevant.	End 2010	Director, SCP	SCP

## Case study: Sustainable Clothing Action Plan

Defra has been working with organisations across the clothing supply chain to develop the [Sustainable Clothing Action Plan](#) to help make the UK fashion industry more sustainable. Launched at London Fashion Week in February 2009, this comprehensive ‘roadmap’ covers the entire lifecycle of clothing from manufacture through to disposal.

Around two million tonnes of clothes and textiles are consumed in the UK each year, which is worth nearly £38bn. Given that 90% of the clothing in the UK is imported, mainly from China, India Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, the social and environmental impacts are largely hidden from the UK consumer.

Defra’s action plan is championing sustainable development by bringing together nearly 300 related organisations – from high street fashion stores to designers and textile manufacturers – to tackle the environmental impacts and social inequalities of the fashion business. One of its most outstanding features is the enthusiastic involvement of some of the biggest names in UK fashion. M&S, Sainsbury’s and Tesco have all pledged to use more recyclable fibres and fabrics and to increase their Fairtrade and organic ranges. Tesco is also looking at its cotton supply chain so it can ban cotton that comes from countries that employ child labour.



<sup>10</sup> Impacts across the lifecycle & global supply chain for clothing (using cotton example). See the [Sustainable Clothing Action Plan](#) for more information.

## 2.5 Addressing Environmental Risk and Emergencies

Defra is committed to achieving its Departmental Strategic Objective (DSO) – ‘*an economy and a society that are resilient to environmental risk*’ – in a sustainable way. This requires that we understand the range of environmental, social and economic impacts of these risks (such as flooding and animal disease), as well as their probabilities and uncertainty, and set in place appropriate and sustainable mitigation and resilience measures with our delivery partners, businesses and members of the public.

One strand of our work on this DSO involves flooding and coastal erosion. Defra has established a flood and coastal erosion risk management programme which aims to ensure that these risks are managed sustainably. It aims to ensure that Government gets best value from its investment in managing risk – investment that will have reached £800m p/a by 2010/11. But the programme also recognises that physical defence measures are not always sustainable and we need to develop a portfolio of measures to manage the risk.

Delivery of this programme will mean:

- We better capture and measure the whole suite of environmental, social and economic benefits of flood/erosion schemes, and improve accountability;
- A sounder financial footing with more certainty of funding and encouragement of locally funded schemes to deliver real benefit where national funds are unavailable;
- Improved efficiencies by delivery partners;
- Reduce potential economic damages from flooding events through better emergency preparedness and adoption of household resilience measures;
- Greater clarity and accountability for surface water flooding with enhanced roles for Local authorities and EA; and
- Promotion of adaptation policies which allow communities to better adapt to the effects of coastal change and which directly influence development planning.

We have published a draft [Flood and Water Management Bill](#) and an action plan for implementing the recommendations of the Pitt report into the major 2007 floods – these combined undertakings are already addressing many of the themes above.

No.	Action	Target date (s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
61	Improve the standard of protection against flooding or coastal erosion risk for 145,000 households.	March 2011	Director of Water	CCE
62	Ensure that our investment in flood and erosion risk management contributes to the improvement of the natural environment by: creating at least 800 hectares of priority biodiversity habitat, and bringing into target condition 24,000 hectares of nationally important wildlife sites currently in unfavourable condition due to drainage or coastal squeeze.	March 2011	Director of Water	NRP

## 2.6 A Thriving Food and Farming Sector with an improving positive net environmental impact

Our aim for the food and farming sectors is that they should continue to develop as competitive, resilient and profitable businesses, contributing to the economic, social and environmental fabric of society. Farming makes a huge contribution to our rural economy and to our way of life. It is also key to two of the greatest global challenges we face: food security and climate change.

One of Defra’s major tasks is to help this vital industry contribute fully towards meeting these challenges; enabling farmers to care for the land, produce efficiently and sustainably, adapting to changing conditions and the availability of inputs and with high animal welfare standards. Our delivery of this Departmental Strategic Objective (DSO) - *a thriving food and farming sector with an improving net environmental impact*- is strongly linked to another of our DSOs to ensure a sustainable, secure and healthy food supply, which is covered in the following section (section 2.7).

**A) Key actions that the Farming for the Future Programme (FFF) delivers on sustainable development and which feed into this DSO, are listed below.**

FFF is designed to help create the conditions for delivering Defra’s vision for English farming in 2020 in which the farming sector is: profitable in the marketplace, continuing to produce the majority of the food we consume; making a positive net environmental contribution (notably in respect of climate change, but also more widely); and managing the landscape and the natural assets that underlie it. Sustainable development (SD) therefore is embedded into everything the FFF strives to deliver and strongly contributes to the SD principles of *‘living within environmental limits’* and *‘achieving a sustainable economy’*.

No.	Action	Target date (s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
63	Ensure that UK experience on sustainable agriculture, including climate change, contributes to global progress – through multilateral engagement (e.g. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change process) and bilaterally (e.g. UK-China Sustainable Agriculture Innovation Network initiative).	2009-2011	Director, Food and Farming	CCE NRP
64	Enable the agriculture sector to fulfil its potential in contributing to climate change mitigation, and to adapt in order to manage the impacts – through raising awareness and influencing behaviour change, delivering policy instruments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and influencing international policy.	2009-2011	Director, Food and Farming	CCE
65	Deliver the Anaerobic Digestion Implementation Plan which will set out the practical measures that Government and stakeholders will take individually and collectively to achieve a major increase in the use of anaerobic digestion.	2009-2011	Director, Food and Farming	CCE, NRP

No.	Action	Target date (s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
66	Develop a coherent and workable plan for future nutrient management that balances farming and environmental benefits and impacts.	2009-2011	Director, Food and Farming	
67	Facilitate the development of an Industry-led Agri Skills Action Plan to improve skill levels in farming, particularly business skills and skills to respond to environmental challenges to ensure improved competitiveness with a positive net environmental contribution.	2009-2011	Director, Food and Farming	NRP, CSC
68	Gather, assess and discuss views and evidence with industry and experts to develop a shared understanding of how resilient the agricultural industry is to the key threats it faces. In particular those with acute shocks. Considering whether and how it can cope with and absorb shocks if they occur and use appropriate mechanisms to mitigate the threats faced.	2009-2011	Director, Food and Farming	NRP, CSC
69	Taking forward the Campaign for the Farmed Environment as an industry-led partnership scheme to retain and exceed the environmental benefits formerly provided by land set-aside in relation to farmland birds and wider biodiversity and resource protection.	2009-2011	Director, Food and Farming	NRP
70	Develop the evidence base to provide an analytical foundation supporting the development of policy to capture the environmental losses formerly provided by land set-aside. This includes the valuation of environmental benefits arising from alternative policy options considered.	Ongoing	Director, Food and Farming	NRP

B) A key strand of our work on farming, in partnership with key delivery partners such as Animal Health or the Veterinary Laboratories Agency, centres around **animal diseases and their impact on the farming sector**. The two biggest areas of Defra's investment on endemic disease are on Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs), including Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) an action on which is included below, and tuberculosis.

No.	Action	Target date (s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
71	Maintain risk-based <a href="#">BSE</a> controls and surveillance, in line with EU requirements, to continue to reduce the annual number of new BSE cases. This will contribute to EU negotiations for more proportionate BSE controls and surveillance, to reduce the economic burden and contribute to a more sustainable farming sector.	Ongoing	Director, Food and Farming	SCP

C) In the longer term, Defra is seeking ambitious **reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)** to build a competitive EU agriculture sector, and ensure farmers can meet the challenges and opportunities of the future. Our Vision for EU agriculture is for an industry that is fundamentally sustainable and integral to the EU economy, environmentally sensitive and socially responsive to the needs of rural communities.



Farmers should be rewarded by the market for their high quality, high value produce, and by taxpayers for providing the societal benefits – particularly environmental goods – that the market cannot otherwise deliver.

By 2015–2020, Pillar 1 should be phased out: freeing farmers to farm and respond effectively to consumer demand. Instead, we want to see a central role for measures that protect and enhance the rural environment, through a reshaped Pillar 2. We are continuing to work with the Commission, Member States and stakeholders to press for radical reform of the CAP. As previously mentioned (on page 26) we are also looking again at the Rural Development Plan for England to understand any potential impacts of CAP reform on rural communities.

No.	Action	Target date (s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
72	Continue to develop an assessment of which environmental outcomes are to be sought and delivered through EU farmers and other land managers by 2020 and beyond. This is following the HM Treasury/Defra publication <a href="#">A Vision for the Common Agricultural Policy</a> in 2005.	Ongoing	Director, Food and Farming	SCP

In addition Defra undertakes a wide range of activities outside its core programmes which are aimed at ensuring that the UK’s farming industry is competitive and sustainable. These activities include negotiating with the European Commission and our partners on market management proposals such as intervention prices, private storage aid, export refunds, marketing standards and other EU proposals for regulating the farming industry.

**Case study: UK-China Sustainable Agriculture Innovation Network (SAIN)**

[SAIN](#) was set up to provide a coherent framework for China-UK collaboration on environmentally sustainable agriculture. Launched in November 2008 by Defra Secretary of State Hilary Benn and Chinese Agriculture Minister Sun Zhengcai, its overarching aim is to contribute to the achievement of a resource efficient, low carbon economy and an environmentally friendly society.

SAIN is initially focusing on four key areas: nutrient management, bioenergy, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and circular agriculture. SAIN recognises that sustainability can only be achieved through partnership, and although it is in its infancy, SAIN has already attracted the involvement of over 25 leading agricultural institutes in the UK and China, with the aim of promoting joint research and thinking to ensure that policy making is better informed. Environmentally sustainable agriculture is a common concern of UK and China and has global implications. The work of SAIN will contribute to global sustainability through wider sharing of experience between developed and emerging economies.

## 2.7 A Sustainable, Secure and Healthy Food Supply

Defra was given a new overarching role on food policy in October 2008 and our new Departmental Strategic Objective (DSO) – as above - reflects our ambitions to ensure that we achieve sustainable, secure and healthy food supplies.

The challenge of feeding many more people by the middle of this century, and to do so in a way that manages climate change risks (both mitigation and adaptation) and does not undermine the ability of future generations to feed themselves, is a major global challenge. We aim to position the UK to contribute to this, and to lead where we can. Key actions for this DSO are still being developed. However, a number of key actions are already in progress, and these are listed below:

No.	Action	Target date (s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
73	Work to embed sustainability into the global debate on how to increase agricultural production to feed 9 billion people by 2050 by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing our evidence base (with a research project on the subject);</li> <li>• Influencing the DfID White Paper; and</li> <li>• Negotiating strong references on sustainability into G8 declaration on food security.</li> </ul>	<b>Complete:</b> DfID White Paper, G8 declaration. <b>November 2009:</b> Defra research project, <b>October 2010:</b> Foresight Project	Director, Food and Farming	NRP, CSC
74	Improve engagement at EU level, with the aim of securing a co-ordinated approach to issues at EU level that impact on delivery of the UK's sustainable food policy	Ongoing	Director, Food and Farming	SCP
75	Clarify with stakeholders and consumers what sustainability means in relation to food.	November 2009	Director, Food and Farming	SCP
76	Develop a suite of indicators for a sustainable food system (measuring progress against this DSO). Defra analysts are advising on construction of indicators, providing data and co-ordinating analysis to support the suite. This is part of ongoing work within Defra to define more clearly what a sustainable food system might look like in the future.	January 2010	Director, Food and Farming	SCP
77	Work with the Office of Government Commerce and other Government Departments to improve the sustainability of public food procurement.	March 2010	Director, Food and Farming	SCP
78	Investigate the links between poor diet, poverty and exclusion.	November 2009	Director, Food and Farming	CSC
79	Strengthen the evidence base on food by aligning the annual food statistics pocketbook with Defra policy on food and providing up to date facts and figures across all themes.	Ongoing	Director Evidence and Knowledge Base	SCP

The [Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative \(PSFPI\)](#) was launched on 26 August 2003 and is helping to deliver across a range of important Government policies, including improving value for money, healthy eating, climate change, economic development, as well as food and farming.

The PSFPI's primary aim is to support the Government's [Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy](#) designed to deliver a world class sustainable farming and food sector that contributes to a better environment and healthier, prosperous communities. Some of the actions we are undertaking under this initiative are included below.

No.	Action	Target date (s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
80	Implement recommendations from Deloitte's evaluation of the PSFPI, which reported in February 2009.	Most by April 2010  Some ongoing	Director, Food and Farming	SCP
81	Develop sustainability criteria for the Department of Health's Healthy Food Mark and help to promote it.	April 2010	Director, Food and Farming	SCP, CSC
82	Review advice and guidance provided on the PSFPI web site to ensure it continues to reflect Government policies in key areas such as: food, farming, climate change, waste minimisation and other developments, recommendations arising from PSFPI evaluation, Prime Minister's Strategy Unit's report "Food Matters", OGC's Collaborative Food Procurement strategy and Healthy Food Mark.	April 2010	Director, Food and Farming	SCP
83	Continue to fund projects in the English regions to improve the supply of food into the public sector, linking into the Collaborative Food Procurement strategy designed to implement National Audit Office's and the Public Accounts Committee in Parliament's recommendations on smarter food procurement in the public sector.	April 2010	Director of Director, Food and Farming	SCP
84	Widen reports on the performance of Whitehall departments to cover more aspects of the PSFPI rather than limiting them to the proportion of UK produce used, which was the main purpose of the first and second reports published.	April 2010	Director, Food and Farming	SCP

## 2.8 Socially and Economically Sustainable Rural Communities

The underpinning rationale for Defra's Departmental Strategic Objective (DSO) covering rural communities is that government wants the same or similar socio-economic outcomes for those living in rural areas as for their urban counterparts, and that these outcomes should be delivered in a manner consistent with [Securing the Future](#).

The task of establishing and maintaining sustainable rural communities is the responsibility of everyone in Government (national, regional and local) and not just Defra. Defra's role is to promote the inclusion of rural interests within mainstream government policy-making and delivery in a way that is both itself sustainable in policy terms and leads to sustainable outcomes, and to maintain an overview of a basket of national indicators in order to determine whether there are any systemic problems resulting from geography/rurality.

The vision of [Socially and Economically Sustainable Rural Communities](#) will be achieved in part in the following ways:

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
85	Fund <a href="#">Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE)</a> and the Rural Community Council (RCC) network with over £10m in the current spending period to ensure that the rural voice has adequate local representation and influence.	March 2011	Director, Rural Programme	CSC
	Fund and maintain a network of <a href="#">Regional Rural Affairs Fora</a> to influence regional policy and delivery.	Ongoing		
86	Sponsor the <a href="#">Commission for Rural Communities</a> to act as a rural adviser, advocate and watchdog, currently funded at £6.4m for 2009/10.	Ongoing	Director, Rural Programme	CSC
87	Fund a rolling programme of research and analysis aimed both at identifying rural issues and at identifying sustainable solutions to rural problems.	Ongoing	Director, Rural Programme	CSC
88	Promote, across Whitehall and beyond, the use of rural proofing tools to ensure that sustainable rural outcomes can be mainstreamed into policy development and delivery.	Ongoing	Director, Rural Programme	CSC

### **Case study: A Guide for Town and Parish Councils- Ways to Tackle Climate Change**

Parish and town councils, the first tier of government, can play a substantial role in our drive to reduce the risks of climate change. The Sustainable Energy and Climate Change Act 2006 gave parish and town councils specific powers in relation to local energy saving measures, which will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change. Parish and town councils can promote and support community initiatives to reduce emissions.

Taking action now not only reduces the impact on the environment, but saves the parish and town council money too. This Defra-produced guide offers advice on how parish and town councils can work with their communities to secure a more sustainable future. It demonstrates how some parish and town councils are already taking a lead in their communities to tackle climate change.

For more information, visit the climate change adaptation page on [local authorities taking action](#).

## **2.9 A Respected Department**

Effective delivery of our Departmental Strategic Objective (DSO) to champion sustainable development means leading by example, and being a respected Department. Our reputation is built up over time by doing our core business well: by delivering the desired policy outcomes within our DSOs. Therefore, all of the good work done in the other DSOs (including how their delivery is framed within the principles of sustainable development) should contribute to turning our 'respect' dials positive over time. Progress against this DSO is reported quarterly to Defra's Management Board.



### 3 Embedding SD in our policy-making

As described in section one, we are working to ensure that SD is embedded in the delivery of all Defra’s programmes and policies. In order to achieve this vision, we must ensure that SD is embedded in the mechanisms by which policy is made. This section sets out the ways in which we are working towards this aim.

**A) Embedding SD in our policy approvals process.**

In our last SDAP we worked to ensure that SD messages and tools were embedded in Defra’s policy making guidance. We now need to ensure that the appropriate checks and mechanisms are in place to ensure that we ‘SD-proof’ the way we make policy. In other words, principles should be underpinned by the principles of SD.

In April 2008, Defra introduced an Approvals Process in the core Department as part of our Portfolio Management, one of the key components of the new business model shaped by the Renew Programme. The approvals process consists of review and challenge of business cases for investment in Programmes, Projects or Ongoing Functions at the appropriate stages of the policy-making process. Defra’s entire portfolio of projects and activities are now assessed against our DSOs. Before a new activity will be funded, it must demonstrate how it will deliver benefits in relation to these outcomes, including SD.

To ensure that SD is fully embedded in this process we will take the following actions:

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
89	Build SD capability of approvals panel members to challenge business cases by providing training on SD.	March 2010	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC
90	Evaluate success of inclusion of SD in business cases and approvals process.	March 2010	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC

**B) Strengthening our evidence base is also crucial to the delivery of sustainable policy, which is underpinned by sound science.**

Good policy is based on robust evidence and we are working to ensure that in Defra we are intelligent customers and commissioners of evidence. We need to make sure that social, economic and environmental factors are taken into account when we are considering our evidence needs, commissioning new research or using existing evidence to help inform our policy development.

This directly complements the approach that we are taking on approvals as policy officials will have to demonstrate strong evidence on the social, economic and environmental impacts of their policy. In order to embed this approach we are committed to the following actions.

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
91	Ensure that guidance for evidence specialists contains advice on how best to incorporate the three pillars of SD into evidence programmes.	By March 2010	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC
92	Embed SD principles in the new Evidence Investment Strategy, including through ensuring that economic and social evidence is given consideration alongside more traditional evidence activities.	December 2009	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC
93	Arrange a workshop for the Science & Engineering Career Home and the Economics, Statistics and Research Career Home within Defra on embedding SD principles within research development.	December 2009	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC

**C) Improve our level of support on *Stretching the Web*.**

[Stretching the web](#) is a tool through which we have embedding SD into our policy cycle: the tool is used to consider the sustainability of policies being developed. In order to ensure that it is effectively and consistently used in policy-making, we need to expand our ability to build capacity.

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
94	Develop a pool of staff able to deliver training on <i>Stretching the Web</i> in order to build capacity within Defra, our Network and across government.	Ongoing	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC

## 4 Embedding SD in our organisation

To effectively champion sustainable development, it is crucial that we are able to show that we are leading by example. The way that we work and the environment in which we work should be fully sustainable, with staff engaged and proud to be a part of Defra. This section lays out the ways in which: we are engaging staff and external stakeholders in our work on SD; making our operations, procurement and IT more sustainable; and ensuring that the Department is an inclusive, fulfilling place to work. This SDAP has been published on the external Defra website to ensure that staff and stakeholders can access and engage with the plan.

### 4.1 Communications and engagement

Effective communications and engagement are key to delivering our core business. Effective communications mean that our customers, our stakeholders, our delivery partners and the wider public understand and buy into our policies and vision. In section 2.1 (page 19) we described how we are surveying our stakeholders to measure Defra's performance on championing SD, and to identify areas of potential improvement.

We are also aiming to build awareness within the Department in order to drive behaviour change towards SD targets. In this section we have included some of the ways in which we are engaging staff and raising awareness on SD.

No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
95	Build up Defra employee literacy around sustainable living and Defra's role in championing SD to encourage behaviour change at work and championing of sustainable living beyond.	2009 - 2011	Head of SCP/ Internal Comms (Defra)	SCP CSC
96	Conduct a survey of staff to better understand how we can encourage and support more widespread greener behaviours at work through internal communications.	December 2009	Director, SSD	SCP
97	Host a talk by Will Day, the Chair of the Sustainable Development Commission, open to all staff. This will raise the profile of SD across the Department and engage staff in Defra's commitment to SD.	November 2009	Director, SSD	SCP, CSC
98	Consider proposals for refreshing the Defra SD Enthusiasts Network and for extending this to include SD enthusiasts within Defra NDPBs.	December 2009	Head of Estates	SCP, CSC
99	Carry out a behaviour change programme across the Defra Network to promote sustainable use of resources (including energy and water) within the workplace. The programme aims to motivate staff and embed a culture change in support of Defra's sustainability ambitions.	April 2011	Head of Estates	SCP, CSC

## 4.2 Information Technology

With the launch of the [Government Green ICT strategy](#) in July 2008, the Defra Network now has a clear target to achieve carbon neutrality for its Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in use by 2012.

The aim is to reduce the Network's ICT footprint as at April 2009 by at least 25% and to match the remaining footprint by using ICT to deliver an equivalent reduction in other Defra Network activities, and then by taking off-setting actions that contribute to the government objective of a low carbon economy and assist the Network in meeting its aims and objectives.

A feasibility study has been completed by Defra's strategic IT supplier IBM, for the core department and the two agencies taking all their services from IBM, and provided:

- A robust measurement of the ICT-in-use footprint (including off-site data centres);
- A list of recommended actions and their impacts for reducing the size of the IT footprint; and
- Recommendations as to how we should seek to neutralise the remaining footprint.

We will work with the other 5 agencies that do not predominantly take IBM services, to establish similar actions, obtain funding for the required investments and then integrate both sets of funded actions into a coherent plan by April 2010 for achieving carbon neutrality for the Network by 2012.

No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
100	Deliver a co-ordinated Green ICT programme for Defra and its 7 executive agencies.	End March 2010	CIO <sup>11</sup>	SCP, CCE
101	Realise a 25% reduction in the carbon footprint from Defra Network's use of ICT services. Exact target to be set once all the agency footprints have been established and investments agreed.	End July 2011	CIO	SCP, CCE
102	Neutralise the remaining carbon footprint by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using ICT to deliver an equivalent reduction in other Defra Network activities, and</li> <li>• Neutralising any shortfall through actions that contribute to the government objective of a low carbon economy.</li> </ul>	End December 2011	CIO	SCP, CCE

<sup>11</sup> CIO- Chief Information Officer

## 4.3 Operations

Defra's Estate comprises 230 sites covering approximately 450,000 m<sup>2</sup><sup>12</sup>. This is made up of roughly 73% office space, and 26% laboratory space, with a diverse collection of buildings.

Defra is committed to reducing energy and water consumption and improving waste management and recycling, and has a responsibility to lead on sustainability. In order to achieve the highest standard of sustainability Defra must ensure that the Estate is run as efficiently as possible, in accordance with industry best practice. Wherever possible, innovative technologies will be introduced to increase energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.

### Case study: Lion House, Alnwick

Lion House, Alnwick, won the Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE) Low Carbon Performance Award new build of the year in February 2009. This follows on from this project being awarded Sustainability Client of the Year in the "Building" Magazine annual sustainability awards. It has also achieved "A+" rating on its Energy Performance Certificate (EPC), acknowledging that the building is a net exporter of energy.

No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
103	Carry out Sustainability audits and undergo <a href="#">BRE's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM)</a> assessments for all new build and major refurbishment projects to ensure compliance with Sustainable Operations on the Government Estate (SOGE) mandated mechanisms.	March 2011	Head, Estates	SCP, CCE,
104	Work with Defra's Sustainable Workplace Management partners to develop an overall Estate delivery plan to improve operational sustainability performance.	November 2009	Head, Estates	SCP, CCE,
105	Implement a programme of energy and water efficiency measures and behavioural change initiatives recommended by the Estate delivery plan.	March 2011	Head, Estates	CCE, NRP

### Carbon management & energy efficiency

The following actions will contribute to achieving SOGE targets as well as piloting new technologies to share with others.

No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
106	Assess all new build and refurbishment projects to determine suitability for a range of renewable energy technologies. Implement technologies where value for money and significant energy savings can be achieved.	March 2011	Head, Estates	CCE

<sup>12</sup> This figure relates solely to the built environment



### Case study: Carbon Trust Standard

Defra was one of only twelve national organisations to achieve [the Carbon Trust Standard](#) in June 2008.

The Carbon Trust Standard is the world's first carbon award that requires an organisation to measure, manage and reduce its carbon footprint and actually make real reductions year-on-year. Unlike other award schemes, organisations take action themselves by cutting carbon across their own operations, rather than paying others to reduce via off-setting. The certification, which runs from April 2008 to March 2010, is for Defra's Office Estate. In 2010 Defra will apply for reaccreditation for its whole Estate, including laboratories.

Defra is working to ensure it is in the best possible trading position for the start of the **Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC)** scheme. A medium and long term delivery plan is currently being developed in partnership with Interserve, Defra's Sustainable Workplace Management contractors, to implement efficiencies which will deliver year on year carbon savings required to meet, and where possible exceed, government targets. In order to ensure maximum benefit is gained from the CRC 'early action metrics', Defra is working towards extending its Carbon Trust Standard accreditation to include the laboratory estate and also widening its coverage of smart metering technologies.

### Water use

Defra is responsible for specific scientific research into the marine environment, food chain development, plant health and animal welfare. This work is undertaken in specialist laboratories and is often water intensive, resulting in high volumes of water consumption by these sites. Numerous initiatives are being implemented to reduce the Department's water use. A programme of replacement of water intensive laboratory equipment is planned with specific pieces of equipment having already been identified. All new build and refurbishment projects on the Defra Estate incorporate water saving technologies. The new Alnwick building and York refurbishment include rainwater harvesting for toilet flushing and other water saving equipment such as low flush toilets, Passive Infrared sensor taps and low flow showers.

No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
107	Implement a programme of water efficiency measures and behavioural change initiatives recommended by the Estate delivery plan.	March 2011	Head, Estates	NRP
108	Identify and replace older, inefficient laboratory equipment with water efficient technologies to target laboratory water use.	March 2011	Head, Estates	NRP

Through the following actions Defra will continue to increase its recycling rates, as well as identify further opportunities for **recycling and reducing waste arisings**.

No.	Actions	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
109	Roll out bin-less office scheme across the Estate, where local recycling facilities permit, to increase quantities of waste recycled and reduce waste to landfill.	March 2011	Head, Estates	SCP
110	Undertake a programme of audits to identify the constituent elements of laboratory waste. This will inform a programme of waste reduction initiatives.	March 2011	Head, Estates	SCP

### **Case study: Bin the Bin**

Defra has introduced 'Bin the Bin' binless office scheme in its Alnwick, London and York offices. The desk side bins were removed and replaced with improved recycling facilities at central points within the office. The benefits include increased recycling rates, a significant reduction in bin liners and efficiencies in the waste management service.

### **Biodiversity**

All major capital developments on the Defra Estate undergo an Ecological Assessment to identify potential impacts and evaluate the conservation value of the site. The assessment also investigates impacts both during construction and in the long term, considering potential for mitigation and enhancements which can be incorporated into the scheme. The following action shows the way in which Defra is encouraging biodiversity on its Estate. Defra is delivering this action in accordance with the [Guidance for Public Authorities in Implementing the Biodiversity Duty](#).

No.	Actions	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
111	In collaboration with workplace support supplier, identify and implement initiatives to encourage biodiversity at appropriate sites on the Defra Estate using survey data as a baseline.	March 2011	Head, Estates	NRP

### **Environmental Management System (EMS)**

Defra has achieved [ISO14001](#) certification for thirty-seven sites across its Estate with further sites being added as part of an ongoing process. ISO14001:2004 requires commitment to the prevention of pollution, legal compliance and continual improvement as part of the management system plan-do-check-act cycle.

No.	Actions	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
112	Gain corporate EMS certification for the Defra Estate, extending coverage to all sites.	March 2011	Head, Estates	NRP

## 4.4 People

Staff awareness and involvement is crucial to embedding SD at the core of Defra. We want people to recognise Defra as a good employer and to want to work in Defra for that reason, as well as in a job which contributes to sustainable development. *Securing the Future* identifies wellbeing as being at the heart of SD and we are committed to ensuring that the Department is an inclusive, fulfilling place to work.

Through these actions, we plan to cement Defra's commitment to its staff, with rigorous monitoring of progress both internally as well as in external equality indexes. We aim to encourage staff to share their dedication and passion through volunteering.

No.	Action	Target date (s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
113	Work to improve the diversity of Defra's public appointments through participation in Government Equalities Office & Cabinet Office planned activity. The programme of activity includes: events and media campaigns (to raise awareness), a mentor network for near misses and a simple guide on positive action.	December 2009	Director, Human Resources	CSC
114	Publish annual workforce monitoring reports.	December annually	Head, Diversity Wellbeing & Pay Strategy	CSC
115	Consult with the equality scrutiny groups to report annually on progress against the Race, Gender and Disability Equality Schemes.	March 2010	Head, Diversity Wellbeing & Pay Strategy	CSC
116	Consult with the equality scrutiny groups to devise a strategy and action plan on how to develop relationships with communities previously hard to reach.	Ongoing	Head, Diversity Wellbeing & Pay Strategy	CSC
117	Report annually on progress against the Wellbeing and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Strategy.	February annually	Head, Diversity Wellbeing & Pay Strategy	CSC

Defra plans to work to become an **Employer of Choice** through participation in national employer benchmarks, including:

No	Action	Target date (s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
118	Improve position in top 100 employers in <a href="#">Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index</a> .	January 2010	Head, Diversity Wellbeing & Pay Strategy	CSC
119	Maintain progress against <a href="#">Work Wise UK</a> accreditation action plan. Defra submits annual progress reports <sup>13</sup> (the next is due in May 2010).	May 2010	Head, Diversity Wellbeing & Pay Strategy	CSC

<sup>13</sup> Against the action plan agreed with WorkWise when Defra was accredited with their Quality Mark in May 2008

We plan to **increase volunteering activity** through various actions, including:

No.	Action	Target date (s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
120	Host a volunteering fair aimed at stimulating interest in volunteering.	November 2009	Head, Diversity Wellbeing & Pay Strategy	CSC
121	Every Management Board member to attend a volunteering day during the life of this SDAP.	September 2009 onwards	Permanent Secretary	CSC NRP

**Strengthening employee engagement** is a priority, and we are committed to actions including the following. Through the governance arrangements laid out for the SDAP (detailed in section 6, pages 53-54) staff are engaged in the delivery of the action plan.

No.	Action	Target date (s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
122	Participate in cross-government pilot employee engagement survey and full civil service survey annually aiming to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incrementally increase response rate compared to 2007;</li> <li>• Identify real progress in scores at corporate and local level compared to 2007; and</li> <li>• Achieve positive scores against civil service benchmarks placing Defra in top two quartiles.</li> </ul>	February 2009 onwards	Head of HR Operations, HR Policy and Employee Relations team	CSC

## 4.5 Procurement

Procurement's role in delivering sustainable outcomes is now well established. Defra has attained the highest level in most themes of the Sustainable Procurement Task Force's Flexible Framework<sup>14</sup>. Sustainability is embedded within our procurement policy and within the induction and training of central procurement staff. Through inclusion of sustainability issues in tenders or during contract management, Defra is seeking the most sustainable solutions to its needs.

With the set up of the [Centre of Expertise in Sustainable Procurement \(CESP\)](#), the pace has increased across Government. Defra has previously committed to lead by example in sustainable procurement; the next step is maintaining good practice and being at the cutting edge of development in sustainable procurement. To be a true champion of SD, Defra needs to share best practice and promote sustainable procurement across its Network.

Our vision for going forward is more collaboration, greater influencing and an opportunity to explore new areas of sustainability. Our aim is to enable the transition from conventional procurement to low carbon, resource efficient, innovative, sustainable procurement sharing our experience with the wider public sector and international community.

No.	Action	Target date (s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
123	Facilitate the embedding of sustainability in procurement across Defra Network to so that they achieve the level of performance on the Flexible Framework recommended by the Sustainable Procurement Task Force; Level 3 in all themes with L5 in one.	Spring 2010	Director of Purchasing and Supply	SCP
124	Expand the existing supplier engagement programme to include businesses not currently supplying to Defra and large multinationals in high sustainability impact industries.	November 2009	Director of Purchasing and Supply	SCP
125	Develop and publish an Ethical procurement policy to underpin sustainable procurement actions.	February 2010	Director of Purchasing and Supply	SCP CSC
126	Integrate sustainability within Defra's procurement capability model.	December 2009	Director of Purchasing and Supply	SCP
127	Review Defra's catering toolkit, e.g. to ensure it is in line with developing policy and good practice.	April 2010	Director of Purchasing and Supply	SCP

<sup>14</sup> For the full details please see our [final report on Defra's SDAP 2007-09](#).



## **Timber**

Defra is responsible for development and implementation of the Government's [Timber Procurement Policy](#), which was introduced in the year 2000 and has since developed into an internationally recognised policy tool. From April 2009 a step change will mean that only timber and timber derived products originating either from independently verifiable legal and sustainable sources, or licensed under a [Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade \(FLEGT\) Voluntary Partnership Agreement \(VPA\)](#) or equivalent only will be demanded for use on the Government estate. From 1 April 2015, only legal and sustainable timber would be demanded.

The primary aim is for all Government Departments to procure legal and sustainable timber. The priority objectives are to:

- Improve forest governance;
- Reduce illegal logging and deforestation;
- Increase the number of Local Authorities to voluntarily adopt the policy;
- Increase the market demand for legal and sustainable timber; and
- Provide market incentives for partner countries signed up to a Voluntary Partnership Agreement or FLEGT license.

For more information visit [the CPET website](#).

No.	Action	Target date (s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
128	Purchase timber that is only from legal and sustainable sources or licensed under a FLEGT voluntary partnership agreement.	From April 2009	Director, Purchasing and Supply	SCP
129	Continue to identify best practice in local timber supply chains and publish case studies.	March 2010 <sup>15</sup>	Director, Purchasing and Supply	SCP
130	Increase awareness amongst Local Authorities (LAs) of the new timber procurement policy and encourage more LAs to adopt timber procurement policies	March 2010 <sup>16</sup>	Director, Purchasing and Supply	SCP
131	Implement an effective mechanism to monitor the implementation of the timber procurement policy for Defra, its service delivery bodies and other Government Departments.	March 2010	Director, Purchasing and Supply	SCP

## **Travel**

Business travel is a business necessity; sustainable business travel is our business objective. Our aim is to reduce the impact of business travel and optimise the use of mobility solutions available to us so that we can reduce the associated CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. To meet our Sustainable Operations on the Government Estate (SOG E) target, our travel habits need to evolve; we need to use the most sustainable and cost effective travel options.

<sup>15</sup> Some activities will be ongoing

<sup>16</sup> As above

We also need to ensure that staff are aware of alternative modes of transport – or alternatives to transport itself – and encourage them to use them. To be effective in this, we need to work together with internal and external stakeholders; travel managers and our IT department.

In addition to reduction plans, we also need to be able to measure and monitor our performance. We need to ensure that we have robust processes and procedures in place to capture our travel data with greater accuracy. This will enable us to develop a strategy to address any areas of concern and align our actions with a holistic and supportive approach. Effective communication and stakeholder engagement will help us raise awareness and assist business areas to make more efficient and sustainable travel choices.

No.	Action	Target date (s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
132	Develop an exemplary approach to Business Travel Management Information for Defra and the Network to enable regular and accurate reporting.	December 2009	Director, Purchasing and Supply	CCE, NRP
133	Create a corporate approach to Business Travel for Defra and the Network including awareness raising and new technologies to reduce CO <sub>2</sub> emissions by setting up and coordinating a communications forum for Defra and the Network.	May 2010	Director, Purchasing and Supply	CCE, NRP
134	Develop and implement a holistic Departmental Travel Plan focusing on commuting and business travel.	December 2010	Head, Estates	CCE, NRP

Defra already commits to offsetting all unavoidable emissions from business travel, through the [Government Carbon Offsetting Scheme](#).

Defra has gone beyond the Government commitment to offset air travel emissions from April 2006 by committing to offset emissions from 1 April 2005. This means that for every Defra flight taken since this date, we invest in renewable energy and energy efficiency projects which reduce or prevent equivalent carbon dioxide emissions elsewhere. Defra has also already committed to carbon offset all rail travel from journeys taken since 1st June 2006, and all vehicle travel from June 2007.

## 5 The Defra Network

Defra is committed to championing SD, but we do not do this in isolation: the support of our network and our partnerships with the Defra Network, as well as with the Third Sector and Sustainable Development Commission, are invaluable.

The Defra Delivery Network is a substantial, diverse, comprehensive set of delivery partners linked to the Departmental core which is vital to the achievement of Defra and the Government's overarching aims. More information on Defra's [delivery landscape](#) can be found on our website.

The Defra Network plays a key role in making SD a reality through their contributions to policy development, their role in policy delivery and in the way they manage their estates and people. A two-way process of engagement has been key in creating this Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP). We have shared drafts of the SDAP and have fed into their SDAPs in return where appropriate. Members of the Defra network have also contributed via bilateral meetings and an SDAP workshop.

Defra is keen to continue to build capacity across Defra's Executive Agencies and NDPBs and to provide support for the development of SDAPs and SD related work. As mentioned in section 4.1 (page 42) we are launching a behaviour change programme across the Defra Network to promote, and engage staff in, the sustainable use of resources.

Action No.	Action	Target date(s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
135	Host 6 monthly workshops with our Network to champion the delivery of SD via our policy, our people, our procurement and our operations.	6 monthly	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC
136	Develop SDAP section of Defra's website to ensure that it hosts all current SDAPs from our network, and provides links to guidance in order to facilitate sharing of best practice across the network.	By Autumn 2009	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC

## 6 Governance

In this section we lay out the roles and mechanisms for the governance of this Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP), to show how we will effectively monitor and report on the implementation of the plan. The wider governance of SD within Defra and across Government is covered in section 2.1, Championing Sustainable Development (pages 10-19).

This SDAP was developed in partnership with programmes across Defra covering our Department Strategic Objectives as well as our operations, communications, procurement, IT and people. These colleagues will continue to be involved with the plan as action owners; overseeing and reporting on the implementation of each action. As mentioned in the previous section, the Defra Network has been involved during the development of the plan, and drafts have also been shared with unions. The SDAP is a living document and we will re-visit it as necessary to reflect changes, for example in priorities and programmes. Progress on actions reports can be fed into this process to inform any revisions during the life of the SDAP.

The **key roles** in reporting on the SDAP within Defra are:

- **Ministers** - who approve the SDAP and annual reports on the implementation of the plan. Dan Norris is the SD Minister and is committed to championing SD within Defra and across Government.
- **Permanent Secretary** - has the ultimate ownership at management level, overseeing the delivery of the SDAP. The Permanent Secretary heads Defra's Management Board, who show their commitment to SD with an annual volunteering day.
- **Sustainable Development Programme (SDP)** - is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the SDAP, including annual reporting on progress to Ministers and Management Board members (and to the SDC).
- **Action owners** - have responsibility for implementing the actions established in the SDAP and for reporting progress towards actions and towards embedding sustainability in key areas<sup>17</sup>, to the SDP.

Our reporting commitments are set out below.

No.	Action	Target date (s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
137	Complete the interim progress report in line with the SDC's reporting guidance. Consider how progress reports on actions can be used to review the SDAP as necessary.	September 2010	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC
138	Complete a final report at the end of the life of this SDAP, in line with SDC guidance.	March 2011	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC

<sup>17</sup> People, Policies, Operations and Governance, monitoring and reporting.

No.	Action	Target date (s)	Owner	StF priority area(s)
139	Explore options for integrating reporting on the SDAP into the internal quarterly reporting by the SDP (to the Management Board) on our DSO to champion sustainable development.	March 2010	Director, SSD	SCP, CCE, NRP, CSC





## 7 Annex

### **The creation of the Department for Energy and Climate Change and what this means for Defra**

Following the creation of the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) in October 2008, Defra leads for Government on adapting to climate change, with the objective of delivering “a society that is adapting to the effects of climate change, through a national programme of action and a contribution to international action.”

There are clear links between adapting to climate change and reducing our emissions – information about how our climate is changing and how we will need to adapt to that helps to show why action to reduce emissions is so important, so Defra and DECC are working closely together.

Defra continues to have a significant role in tackling climate change at home and abroad, through direct and indirect contributions, on both CO<sub>2</sub> and non-CO<sub>2</sub> gases. Defra supports DECC in Government; makes a strong contribution to cutting emissions in the sectors where we have an influence; and integrates wider environmental and sustainable development priorities into the climate change agenda.

Internationally, Defra contributes to policies on forestry, biodiversity, food security and marine conservation – all of which can help reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions or protect globally important carbon sinks, and contribute to delivering international action on adaptation. Defra also helps to resolve tensions in international policy between climate change mitigation measures and their wider environmental impacts. For example, our role on international bio fuels policy, forests and food security and through multilateral environmental agreements.

Defra also has a critical role in maintaining the integrity of existing carbon stores in UK soils, forests and marine ecosystems which would have a fundamental effect on GHG emissions if these were significantly degraded.

There are many ‘win win’ policies which help reduce GHGs and also deliver wider Defra objectives. However, there are also some climate change measures which could have negative impacts on these wider objectives. Reconciling these will need an integrated approach to social, economic and environmental benefits – and in some cases prioritising environmental benefits over the others – where conservation objectives are to be met - or vice versa.