

SDC Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP) assessment

Organisation: Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)
Title of SDAP: Sustainable Development Action Plan 2007-2009

SDAP Publication date: April 2008
SDC Assessment date: August 2009

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

SUMMARY

	Score	Rating
Coverage	1/4	
Strategic planning	10/12	
Actions	9/12	
Ownership, engagement and delivery	5/6	
Monitoring, review and reporting	0/6	
OVERALL	25/40	

ISSUES AND RISKS

The JNCC has produced a very comprehensive SDAP which the SDC congratulates it on. This SDAP clearly articulates how the organisation contributes to government's aims and objectives on sustainable development, and has set an impressive array of actions to drive its sustainability performance forward.

However, the SDC is concerned that the SDAP does not contain a clear explanation of the structures and methods in place for reviewing and reporting against the actions and commitments contained in the plan. This is a vital part of any SDAP. The SDC is aware that the JNCC is currently developing its approach to this process and encourages the organisation to use this very positive assessment to renew its commitment to delivering its business more sustainably.

JNCC'S RESPONSE

The Joint Nature Conservation Committee wishes to thank SDC for its comments. This was the JNCC's first Sustainable Development Action Plan, covering the financial years 2007-2009. The process of developing the SDAP was part of a wider JNCC environmental improvement agenda and aimed to compliment these activities and provide a strategic framework for the organisation. JNCC believes that the SDAP has clearly achieved this but we recognise that improvements need to be made in specific areas such as providing more information on reporting mechanisms. Some omissions from the SDAP reflect the fact that these are integral to JNCC's core work and ways of working. Our mission is to provide evidence and advice to assist the UK government and devolved administrations in developing and implementing coherent domestic and international policies on the protection of natural resources as an integral part of sustainable development – everything we do contributes to sustainable development. We also work extensively with other organisations in delivering our work. The Joint Committee itself brings together the country conservation bodies and we work with the staff from those organisations, other government departments and nongovernmental organisations on a day to day basis to deliver our work. We will continue to prioritise our use of resources so that we deliver the greatest nature conservation benefit we can whilst minimising the negative impact of our business operations.

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

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

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

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

OWNERSHIP, ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

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

MONITORING, REVIEW AND REPORTING

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