



Marine and Fisheries Agency

Sustainable Development Action Plan 2009

FOREWORD



The Marine and Fisheries Agency's Sustainable Development Action Plan sets out how the Agency works towards the objectives set out in the UK Government Strategy for Sustainable Development (*Securing the Future*).

It sets out our commitment to improving our standards in relation to the environment and our social and economic footprint.

The Agency is committed to sustainable development and forms the core of our business. Our activities contribute directly to wider government objectives for sustainable development, including those for climate change and sustainable consumption and production. In particular, the Agency is a major partner in helping Defra to achieve its aim of “clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas”.

The Sustainable Development Action Plan illustrates the integration of sustainable development throughout the Marine and Fisheries Agency as we work to support Defra's sustainable development policies.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nigel Gooding". Below the signature is a horizontal line.

NIGEL GOODING
Chief Executive

MFA Sustainable Development Action Plan

The Marine and Fisheries Agency is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The Agency employs some 200 people located in London and 18 offices around the coast of England.

The Agency provides service delivery, inspection and enforcement activities on behalf of Government in the marine and fisheries sector.

The Agency's vision is:

A trusted manager of the marine environment and sea fisheries recognised for our fairness and valued for our professionalism, expertise and high standards.

This is achieved through five key objectives:

- to be a key partner in the management of marine fisheries;
- to enforce regulations professionally, consistently and fairly;
- to contribute to the sustainable use of the marine environment;
- to provide specialist information to inform the development of policy and its effective implementation;
- to promote an open, diverse and fair culture in which staff are encouraged to reach their full potential.

Marine and Fisheries Agency commitment to Sustainable Development

The Agency is committed to continuous improvement of our sustainable development performance. It forms the core of our business. Our activities contribute directly to wider government objectives for sustainable development, including those for climate change and sustainable consumption and production. In particular, the Agency is a major partner in helping Defra to achieve its aim of "clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas".

Our aim is to ensure that environmental objectives become part of our business objective in a cost effective manner and the Sustainable Development Action Plan illustrates the integration of sustainable development throughout the Marine and Fisheries Agency as we work to support Defra's sustainable development policies. The Agency focuses on sustainability by addressing the four key priorities identified in 'Securing the Future', the 2005 UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy and the UK Strategic Framework www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/publications/uk-strategy/index.htm

The four key priorities are :

- social progress which recognises the needs of everyone
- effective protection of the environment
- prudent use of natural resources, and
- maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

Last year Defra launched a long-term vision for securing sustainable fisheries by 2027. The aim is to guide future fisheries policy and provide direction for everyone involved in marine fisheries striking a balance between economic, social and environmental priorities. The Marine and Fisheries Agency is a major partner in helping to deliver that vision. It provides an important framework for the Agency's activities and strategic direction in managing sea fisheries.

As part of the Government's overall strategy for the marine area it has introduced to Parliament a Marine and Coastal Access Bill which will create a framework for management of the seas, based on marine planning, that balances conservation, energy and resource needs.

The Bill will also seek to modernise and strengthen the way fisheries are managed; simplify and streamline the regulation and licensing of marine activities; improve marine nature conservation; and the creation of a new Marine Management Organisation (MMO). It is envisaged that the MMO will act as a champion for the integrated management of our seas. It will make a unique contribution to sustainable development by bringing together the delivery of many marine functions of the UK Government within a single independent body including strategic planning, fisheries management, marine licensing and nature conservation enforcement.

The Business Case- benefits

As an Agency of Defra and an advisor to the Government on Marine issues, we aim to conduct our business and operations to reflect the best environmental practice.

Businesses which apply sustainable principles as a cornerstone to their business have improved efficiencies, provided a better quality service and an improved environmental performance.

By embedding sustainable principals the MFA hopes to achieve efficiency savings and demonstrate that we are actively seeking to improve our environmental, social and economic performance.

By using and wasting less, improving our efficiencies and in the way we work and what we buy there will be savings for the MFA.

There will be times when the sustainable option will be more expensive. The MFA believes that value for money can be achieved while respecting the principles of sustainable development.



Our Obligations

The Agency has a wide range of delivery responsibilities and functions for marine and fisheries and the waters around the coast. These functions and responsibilities are covered by a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with core-Defra. It sets out the responsibilities of each party, the activities, targets and the way in which they are measured. These responsibilities and the link with the four key priorities from the UK Government SD Strategy are detailed below:

- Delivering UK responsibilities for monitoring and control of fishing activities under the Common Fisheries Policy
- Enforcement of sea fisheries legislation – we are committed to working with the fishing industry to achieve compliance with EU and national regulations designed to ensure that fish resources are exploited in an economically effective and sustainable way
- Taking appropriate action where infringements of fishing activities have been detected (including the use of fixed administrative penalties when these are introduced)
- Implementation of EU marketing regime
- Fishing vessel licensing
- Ensuring compliance with economic links provision which ensures that fishing vessels contribute to economies of UK fishing communities
- Management of UK fleet capacity
- Management of UK fisheries quotas
- Marine consents and licensing – the breadth of activities licensed by the Agency is vast ranging from the construction of a small jetty to an entire offshore wind farm. The Agency is committed to helping government achieve its aim of 10% of UK electricity production from renewable sources by 2010 and 20% by 2020
- Licensing of marine minerals extraction
- Monitoring and enforcement of marine consent applications and works under the Food and Environment Protection Act and unlicensed works
- Monitoring, control and enforcement of the Offshore Marine Conservation Regulations for implementing the EU Habitats and Wildbirds Directive
- Biological sampling of fish stocks
- Data Collection Regulation (EC) 1543/2000
- Management, recording and provision of data on fishing activities and catches
- Approving chemical use at sea and on the shoreline to treat oil spills

- Ensuring that those responding to marine pollution incidents take marine fisheries environmental impacts properly into account. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) leads operations and is advised on health issues by the Health Protection Agency and the Food Standards Authority. In an emergency, economic considerations are immaterial
- Operating the EU fisheries grants scheme which provides aid for businesses to support and encourage sustainability and profitability



Our Commitments

The way we interface with our customers and stakeholders e.g. The UK Fishing Fleet, Port Owners, Wind Farm Developers, Wildlife Conservationists, Fish Farms, Environmentalists, etc allows us to expand our ability to achieve sustainable development goals. Not only do we enforce measures that aim to secure greater Sustainable Development, we also seek to encourage others to take action, by sponsoring through the Grant Scheme projects that promote sustainable development, scientific advice and by enforcement of infringements.

We have identified a number of actions which will be taken over the next 12 months to achieve the biggest impact on “key priorities” that are relevant to the MFA. Other actions will be considered and implemented in due course. The effectiveness of the actions will be reviewed on an annual basis.

A main drive for the Agency is to be more pro active in reducing car travel by increasing use of rail, sharing transport when travelling to meetings. The adoption of EU requirements for satellite monitoring of fishing vessels over 15m vessels has increased our ability to target inspection activity on land (thus reducing unnecessary car usage) and reduced our dependence on sea and aerial surveillance. The Agency’s offices are located where the major fishing communities are, giving ready access for the industry and reducing their transport requirements.

The Business Relationship Team has also raised the awareness of sustainable development with the implementation of the new European Fisheries Fund (EFF), (an EU grant Scheme) this encourages sustainable development to be part of the criteria when candidates apply for grants.

All procurement throughout the MFA has at its foundation the principle of sustainability to procure wherever possible the most effective service / product possible.

Sustainable Consumption and Production

The MFA in line with the core Department (Defra) uses the framework agreements set up by the Procurement & Contracts Department (PCD) within these agreements the criteria to be achieved on sustainability is laid out.

By joining the Defra framework agreements the MFA benefits from the economies of scale that can be achieved by being a large customer

In the areas of travel and energy usage the MFA has as an objective for 2009 to gather more information on the Agencies footprint, so that going forward it can identify where improvements can be made.

Waste recycling was an issue that was identified as an area for improvement, the introduction of recycling areas at HQ office has reduced the amount of non recyclable waste from the HQ building and improved the culture of the staff

Action	Target	Responsibility	Purpose/Outcome
All new contracts being negotiated from March 2008 will take account of sustainability particularly in relation to: i) managed and reducing levels of energy consumption in the provision of goods and services; ii) procurement of materials from sustainable or renewable sources; and iii) use of public transport or alternative communications measures to reduce resource consumption.	March 2009 & ongoing Objective for 2009 to gather more information to seek improvement opportunities	Agency Directors	Need for sustainability will be promoted in all new contracts encouraging suppliers to promote strategies for sustainable resource consumption.
All supplier agreements entered directly by the Agency will contain reference to sustainability plans, and specify appropriate measures to reduce energy and materials usage (or	31 August 2009 and ongoing Using PCD framework agreements	Agency Directors	Need for sustainability will be promoted with suppliers encouraging them to promote strategies for sustainable resource

ensure that suitable clauses are introduced at the earliest available opportunity).			consumption.
All supplier agreements entered into by our partners in Defra will be reviewed (in conjunction with Defra) to ensure that they have taken appropriate steps to establish sustainability plans.	31 October 2009 and ongoing Using PCD framework agreements	Agency Directors	Build measures into each contract used by the Agency to ensure existing terms are sustainable and to promote strategies by suppliers to ensure future resource consumption is sustainable.
The Agency will: a) analyse existing expenditure on paper and printer consumables (by site, where feasible); b) direct senior managers to produce local action plans to reduce consumption of print media by their teams; and c) monitor the effect this has on consumption.	31 March 2009	Agency Directors/ Heads of Teams	Establish baselines on a visible source of waste and energy consumption. Then use less paper, less toner, less surface mail, less energy.

Climate change and energy

Action	Target	Responsibility	Purpose/Outcome
Reduce carbon footprint for travel through greater use of video and telephone conference facilities. Staff to use rail rather than car where appropriate and use car sharing where feasible. Keep air travel to the minimum necessary.	To be introduced as part of core Defra action plan. Baseline measures to be implemented from Defra action plan	Agency Directors	Reduction of travel cost, time and carbon usage.
Reduce carbon off-setting for business air miles by choosing other means of travel where appropriate	To be introduced as part of core Defra action plan. Baseline measures to be implemented from Defra action plan	Agency Directors	Reduction of travel cost, time and carbon usage.

Natural Resource Protection and Environmental Enhancement

This is central to our business. Our Business Plan sets out the areas where we undertake delivery functions, operations and policies that contribute to sustainable development. This includes:

- monitoring, control and surveillance of fishing activities so as to achieve greater compliance with legislation aimed at ensuring long term and sustainable exploitation of fish stocks and protection of fishing communities;
- protecting the marine environment and ensuring equitable and sustainable use of marine resources – this includes licensing and monitoring of marine construction activities below mean high water ranging from small jetties to major projects like marinas;
- contributing to Government targets on production of electricity through renewable energy by licensing offshore wind farms, wave hubs etc.
- undertaking a comprehensive programme of biological sampling activities to support scientific assessments of fish stocks;
- develop and operate a grants regime which supports and encourages sustainability and profitability and meets EU and Government standards of financial propriety and accountability.

People

Every member of staff has a responsibility to help deliver sustainable development, from the advice and services we provide to our work place practices. Learning and development is encouraged. The Agency's future is dependant on the knowledge the organisation has and how this meets its customer's needs. As part of the Professional Skills in Government programme the Agency will seek to increase the knowledge base for its people with sustainability issues included as part of training for everyone to ensure integration in all work areas.

We will promote cultural change through the following actions:

- Training and development, ensure the staff have the skills to implement the Action Plan
- Increase awareness of environment issues by introducing a page on our intranet dedicated to sustainable development, updating as required

Sustainable Communities

The Agency is focused on sustainable communities through the delivery of its many statutory and non statutory functions such as management of fishing quotas and payment of grants under EU fisheries funding regime. The Agency works closely with local grants facilitators and Regional Development Agencies to assist local industry and communities to make the best use of available funding opportunities. A business support project has

been implemented to explore how funding and other resource opportunities may be made available to small businesses and coastal communities.

The Agency is working with Business in the Community on a specific project in North Shields on developing opportunities for the fishing industry and the local community. Sustainable fishing and production is a key part of this project.

Action	Target	Responsibility	Purpose/Outcome
Induction training to include sustainable development.	31 March 2009	Head of HR and Corporate Services	All new staff joining the Agency will be aware of the Sustainable Development Action Plan and the need to comply with the measures.
Intranet will include an awareness information programme on the targets to be met under the sustainable programme.	March 2009	Finance and Corporate Services Director	
Undertake project to explore scope for identifying funding and other support for coastal businesses and communities. The funding would be any local public sector or business funding to strengthen the position of the fishing industry acting within the community. The criteria for sustainability is a matter for those funding bodies. The Agency will focus the availability of grant to sustainable projects.	The project is underway and due for completion by the end of 2009. The new European Fisheries Grant Scheme applies from 2008 to 2013	CEO	

Monitoring, evaluation and accountability

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for strategic direction of the Agency and sustainable development. He is currently supported by four Directors: Finance, HR and Corporate Services, Operations and Effort Management and Statistics. They are responsible for implementation, co-ordination and monitoring the sustainable development action plan. Progress against targets will be monitored and evaluated on an annual basis by the Management Committee. There will be a report on this plan in the Agency's Annual Report and Accounts. The plan itself will be reviewed in September 2009 (for period January 2009 – end March 2010) and annually in February thereafter for the next financial year.

This Action Plan has been approved by the Agency's Management Committee.