

SDC Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP) assessment

Organisation: Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD)
Title of SDAP: ECGD Sustainable Development Action Plan 2009-2011

SDAP Publication date: July 2009
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	2/2	GREEN
Strategic planning	8/12	AMBER
Actions	2/12	RED
Ownership, engagement and delivery	2/6	RED
Monitoring, review and reporting	1/6	RED
OVERALL	15/38	RED

ISSUES AND RISKS

It is encouraging to see that ECGD positions itself as a proponent among international Export Credit Agencies in improving standards and practices. This could be built on further by stating how the department intends to raise ambition levels internationally, and by setting out what sustainable lending practices look like and how they can be implemented.

As with all government departments ECGD has a responsibility to be aware of the contribution its projects make in terms of social, economic and environmental impacts and to ensure its activities are not in conflict with government's sustainability goals. For example, ECGD could play a key role in exploring with HMT (whose consent the department operates under) where the barriers lie in supporting environmental technologies and cleaner energy sources as part of government's low carbon drive.

ECGD is currently working on its 2010-2012 SDAP and the SDC looks forward to working with the department through this process and following its progress.

ECGD'S RESPONSE

ECGD is disappointed to receive a red rating from the SDC for its 2009-11 (SDAP). ECGD considers that such a rating does not reflect the evidence provided by ECGD to the SDC on: * ECGD's commitment to sustainable development (as reflect, for instance, in its 5 Star rating from the SDC in the *Sustainable Development in Government* assessment of April 2009 in respect of the operational targets for central government departments set out in the *Sustainable Operations of the Government Estate* for 2007/08); or * The leadership role ECGD plays, as internationally recognised, in promoting sustainable development within the international export credit community; or * ECGD's primary role as defined by statute, which is to support UK trade; or * ECGD's obligation to comply with the financial objectives set for it by HM Treasury under its Consent; or * ECGD's policy remit as prescribed by Ministers, which includes pursuit of a level playing field on official support trade internationally while taking into account the Government's international policies on sustainable development, for which other departments carry lead responsibility; or * The way in which all decision-making by ECGD on support for new transactions takes into account its obligations to comply with OECD agreements governing official export credit agencies, and with its published policies, in respect of sustainable development. * ECGD recognises, however, that its SDAP could benefit by being clearer in certain respects, particular where it has a good story to tell, such as on Procurement, Operations, and SDAP Ownership, Engagement and Review. * ECGD will prepare a new SDAP for 2010-12 for this purpose and will seek the SDC's advice on it before it issued.

COVERAGE		GREEN		
	Score	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?	N/A		
STRATEGIC PLANNING		AMBER		
	Score	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		RED		
	Score	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

RED

	<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

RED

	<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		