



10 March 2003

Dear Colleague

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

In early February, Margaret Beckett, Secretary of State for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, announced the Government's intention to develop a strategy for sustainable consumption and production (SCP).

Work on developing the strategy will be taken forward by a team of Defra and DTI officials, including Chris Hewett who has been temporarily seconded from the Environment Agency. The aim is to publish a strategy in the early summer, which will provide a clear and concise statement of the Government's aims and objectives on SCP. Further details are given in the attached terms of reference.

The successful implementation of the strategy will require action by a wide range of stakeholders. Although there will not be time for extensive discussions before the document issues, we envisage holding a focused programme of events and dialogue on specific aspects of implementation following publication.

In the meantime, we would be interested to learn of any work you may have done in this area. We will also seek to use existing opportunities, including externally organised events to help inform the developing strategy. If you are considering holding an event, which encompasses SCP, please let us know. Details will be posted on a new dedicated webpage - www.defra.gov.uk/environment/business/scpstrategy.

For more information, please Email the Strategy Team at scpstrategy@defra.gov.uk.

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STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

1. One of the key WSSD outcomes was a commitment '*to promote a 10-year framework of programmes in support of more sustainable patterns of consumption and production*' (SCP). Margaret Beckett formally announced the Government's intention to develop a strategy for SCP in her keynote speech at the 'Guardian & Observer Business & Society Conference' on 6 February 2003.

Terms of reference

2. To develop a strategy document on sustainable consumption and production incorporating resource productivity, which takes account of the Government's international commitments and associated major work on energy, waste and procurement with a view to publication by early Summer 2003.

Purpose of strategy

3. The strategy will set out a succinct statement of the sustainable consumption and production challenge, why it is important, and the key elements of the Government approach to encouraging and facilitating practical action. It will also inform the UK's contribution to policy frameworks, priorities and plans at EU and international level (including UNEP and OECD).
4. Specifically, the strategy will set out what we are already doing and look at what else we may need to do. It will:
 - Set out the economic, social and environmental rationale for long-term policy planning to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation and resource use
 - Provide a strategic framework which sets out the main elements of Government activity in this area, including the two major policy blocks of energy and waste, and demonstrate how delivery of relevant PSA targets will contribute to sustainable consumption and production
 - Consider the case for further indicators for resource use as a means to monitor and stimulate long term improvements
 - Set out the Government's approach to sustainable consumption, with specific proposals to help empower consumers and improve the environmental impacts of goods and services (e.g. with better information working to reduce environmental impacts along the whole supply chain and life cycle of goods and services)

- Identify the key policy levers for improving resource productivity, and consider options for a coordinated policy package to take this agenda forward (e.g. using the principles set out in the HMT paper, 'Tax and the environment: using economic instruments')

5. A Regulatory Impact Assessment will accompany the Strategy.

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