Defra deals with the essentials of life – water, food, air, land, people, animals and plants.
Our Strategy 2003-06 describes how we aim to deliver our 6 priorities over the next three years.

1. Sustainable Development – from concept to reality

Our target is to promote sustainable development across government and the country as a whole as measured by achieving positive trends in the government’s headline indicator of sustainable development.

- Priority 1 – action to raise awareness of the principles and practices of sustainable development across government.
- Priority 2 – develop and promote tools to ensure government decisions and policies are sustainable.
- Priority 3 – ensure that the UK’s approach to sustainable development is still the right one.
- Priority 4 – management of natural resources in a way that meets the immediate and long-term needs.
- Priority 5 – a unified approach to EU and international affairs.
Our target is to reduce the gap in productivity between the least well performing rural areas and the English median by 2006, and improve the accessibility of services for rural people.

- Priority 1 – improve the accessibility and quality of public services for rural communities.
- Priority 2 – develop the capacity of rural communities to deliver local improvements.
- Priority 3 – develop the value of the countryside.
- Priority 4 – ensure that policies and programmes are fit for purpose.
3. Climate Change – global challenge, local action

Our target is to improve the environment and sustainable use of natural resources to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to reduce fuel poverty amongst vulnerable households.

- Priority 1 – monitor and coordinate actions across all sectors and all of government.
- Priority 2 – pursue climatic actions across major economic sectors.

4. Farming and Food – facing the future

Our target is to deliver more customer-focused, competitive and sustainable farming and food as measured by the increase in agriculture’s gross value added per person excluding support payments; and secure Common Agricultural Policy reforms that reduce production-linked support, enabling enhanced EU funding for environmental conservation and rural development.

- Priority 1 – a more effective food chain.
- Priority 2 – influence the global context of the food chain.
- Priority 3 – enhance the environment through farming.
- Priority 4 – invest in people and knowledge for the future.
- Priority 5 – achieve healthy communities.
5. Animal Health and Welfare – a holistic approach

Our target is to protect public health and ensure high standards of animal health by reducing the incidence of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and the time taken to clear up cases of poor welfare in farmed animals.

We are publishing our strategy later in 2003, and it is likely to reflect the following issues:

- consistently high standards of animal health and welfare;
- improved public health;
- capacity to deal swiftly and effectively with disease emergencies;
- policies and programmes that are fit for purpose; and
- professional veterinary services.
6. Less Waste and More Recycling

Our target is to enable 25% of household waste to be recycled or composted by 2005/06.

Our aims are to ensure:

- effective partnership between local and central government;
- unrestricted development and use of new and innovative technologies;
- a robust evidence base to inform sound waste management;
- greater waste awareness and education; and
- reduced levels of household waste.

Delivering Our Strategy

To achieve this ambitious programme, we must continue to build Defra’s capacity to deliver at all levels. We must be clear in what we will do; focus on what the public want and deliver high quality services to our customers; and invest in our people.
If you would like a full copy of ‘Our Strategy 2003-06’ call, write or email Defra Publications. Please quote reference PB7981.

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