Defra works for the essentials of life – water, food, air, land, people, animals and plants.
Our vision

Our vision of the future is of a world in which climate change and environmental degradation are recognised and addressed by all nations and where low carbon emissions and efficient use of environmental resources are at the heart of our whole way of life. A future where, here in the UK, rural communities are diverse, economically and environmentally viable, and socially inclusive with high quality public services and real opportunities for all. A country where the food, fishing and farming industries work closely together with Government and are not dependent on output-related subsidies to produce safe, nutritious food which contributes positively to consumer choice and the health of the whole nation. A place where the land is managed in such a way as to recognise its many functions, from production through to recreation; where we seek to promote biodiversity on land and in our seas; and where the promotion of animal welfare and protection against animal disease is at the core of the way in which we farm and live.

The pursuit of sustainable development, which means a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come, is central to achieving this vision.
As a result of the 2002 Spending Review we will see our expenditure grow at an average of 2.7% per year over this period. We cannot do all that we or the public and our customers and stakeholders might want. So we have had to focus our resources on the most important priorities and we will be accountable for their delivery to the Treasury, to Parliament, to stakeholders and customers, and to the public.

My priorities for the period 2003-06 are:

- turning the concept of sustainable development into reality: economic growth with better lives for people and a better environment; and managing key natural resources, such as land, countryside, water, and fisheries to benefit consumers, business and the environment, including protection from flooding;
- reducing pollution especially, by the gases that threaten our atmosphere and climate;
- helping create a sustainable food and farming supply chain serving the market and the environment;
- reducing risks of animal diseases, and being ready to control them when they occur; and
- helping everyone to cut down on waste and meet tough targets for recycling.

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. In short, we must link new resources to reform.

Margaret Beckett
Secretary of State
Defra’s programme
Defra’s programme for 2003–06

In the 2002 Spending Review, the Government set departmental spending plans for the three years from 2003/04 to 2005/06. For Defra, the settlement allows us to make progress on our most vital objectives but we cannot do everything and we have had to make difficult choices about priorities.

This strategy focuses on our most important targets. It includes a positive response to the Commission on Food and Farming; a wide range of work on animal health; additional investment in flood defence; pursuing the Government’s policy for rural areas; pursuing EU obligations to reduce landfill and modernising the way Defra operates through the Developing Defra programme.

The Government has long-term goals and these are clear, accountable and transparent through our framework of Public Service Agreements and Delivery Plans. Annex 1 summarises our Public Service Agreement targets within the framework of Defra’s overall objectives and the following sections highlight the relevant links. Investment in services will be accompanied by modernisation of delivery mechanisms and we will in particular be focusing on the review of rural delivery arrangements, led by Lord Haskins.

Defra is a large and complex organisation and this strategy cannot cover all the work we do. Our policies are delivered by a range of bodies, including local government, the Regional Development Authorities and Non-Departmental Public Bodies, as well as Defra’s own delivery arms and Executive Agencies. Over 14,000 people work on a very diverse range of activities in Defra and its Executive Agencies, providing services to benefit the economy, environment and people. Around 80,000 people have direct contact with us daily, for example through regulations advice and grant schemes.

Much of our work is vital to the running of the economy and society as a whole, such as our work to control animal diseases, programmes to protect air and water quality, and flood and coastal defence. Much is driven by the requirements of implementing EU law in ways that are fair, effective and proportionate. Many staff in the frontline of Defra who do this work are experiencing change as we develop new ways of working and adapt to opportunities provided by new technology.

More comprehensive information is found on the website (www.defra.gov.uk) particularly in the Departmental Report, our Business Plans and Delivery Plans.
Leading across government
Sustainable development – from concept to reality

Defra’s aim is sustainable development, which means a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come, including:

- a better environment at home and internationally, and sustainable use of natural resources;
- economic prosperity through sustainable farming, fishing, food, water and other industries that meet consumers’ requirements; and
- thriving economies and communities in rural areas and a countryside for all to enjoy.

Defra’s objective 5 is to promote sustainable management and prudent use of natural resources domestically and internationally.

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 indicators of sustainable development.

The goal of sustainable development is to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. To achieve this government and other sectors of society in the UK and in the world as a whole need to meet the following objectives at the same time:

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

**Priority 1. Action to raise awareness of the principles and practices of sustainable development across government.**

We will:

- promote government action throughout 2003–06, including at regional and local level, to follow up commitments made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in autumn 2002, by working to incorporate actions to meet headline indicator targets in other Departments;
help Government departments deliver more sustainable ways of operating and reducing their own impacts and promote more sustainable products and policies in purchasing decisions by government and public bodies;

- embed sustainable development appraisal tools and approaches in Defra and beyond by supporting sustainable development in key Defra beacon policy areas, including new strategies for sustainable farming and food, the food industry, and for animal health as well as in rural affairs, conservation and environmental policy areas and trialling appraisal tools in other departments;

- harness external knowledge and expertise in promoting sustainable development by sponsoring the Sustainable Development Commission and Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution;

- launch and implement a review of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy during 2004;

- produce a new strategy for sustainable production and consumption in the UK, following up some of the key themes agreed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development;

- improve the contribution of the Environment Agency – as the Government’s single largest environmental regulator – to sustainable development objectives; and

- improve the consistency with which all organisations linked to Defra focus on sustainable development objectives – not least through the National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Countryside Agency, English Nature and Defra’s science and industry bodies.

Priority 2.
To develop and promote tools to ensure government decisions and policies are sustainable.

We will work with other Government departments to promote integrated policy appraisal in government and securing inter-departmental agreement by the end of 2004 on a strategy for the use of integrated policy appraisal tools in policy-making by:

- assessing the use of the Integrated Policy Appraisal tool in a pilot study involving 10 projects in five departments including Defra;

- achieving consensus of the value of integrated policy appraisal across Departments; and

- embedding rural proofing, a way in which we encourage others to think about the impacts of policies on people in rural areas, across Government by 2004.
Priority 3.
To ensure that the UK’s approach to sustainable development and the headline indicators are still the right ones.

We will develop and launch by May 2003 a process for reviewing the UK Sustainable Development Strategy by 2005 including: a mechanism for interdepartmental discussion of areas where the headline sustainable development indicators are not moving in the right direction; action to follow up the United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development and a strategy for stakeholder consultation and engagement. The strategy review will involve:

- reviewing the underlying principles of sustainable development, their application and effectiveness and the techniques for embedding sustainable development in decision-making;

- agreeing new priorities for the UK on sustainable development for the next 10–15 years, reviewing progress with the existing headline indicators and adapting these in the light of emerging new priorities and themes; and

- engaging the devolved administrations on the scope and content of the new strategy and engaging a wide variety of stakeholder interests in the elements of the review.

Priority 4.
Sustainable development: In Defra, in practice.

By bringing together responsibilities for the environment, food and farming and rural affairs, Defra is uniquely placed to promote this agenda and, in doing so, the management of our natural resources in a way that meets immediate and future needs. The steps we are taking to safeguard these assets include:

- delivering the biodiversity commitments set out in *Working with the Grain of Nature – a biodiversity strategy for England* – the World Summit at Johannesburg set a target to significantly reduce the rate of loss in the world’s biodiversity by 2010 – we are well placed to play a key role in achieving this through our prominent roles in the major biodiversity conventions, our funding for initiatives such as the Great Ape Survival Project (GrASP), and tough action against wildlife criminals;

- promoting the care of special wildlife sites, for example through working closely with English Nature and others including landowners to ensure that best use is made of relevant funding streams, legislation and delivery agencies for management and improvement of the condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
reversing the decline of farmland birds through the projects set out in the Delivery Plan for our farmland birds PSA Target. Central to this will be increasing significantly the area covered by agri-environment schemes under the England Rural Development Programme, including by piloting and implementing an entry-level agri-environment scheme which will be available to the majority of farmers in England.

delivering an increase in Government funding for flood and coastal defence which, by 2005/06, will rise to £564 million, an increase of £150 million on current levels; working with the Environment Agency – who will be made responsible for all rivers presenting the greatest flood risk – and others to ensure that this investment is properly used to further reduce flood risk across the country;

introducing a Water Bill in the 2002/03 Parliamentary session which will contribute to our objectives by reforming water abstraction licensing to provide new powers to protect the environment and manage water resources more effectively, and improving the position of consumers through a new independent Consumer Council for Water;

implementing the EU water framework directive and hence improving the ecological quality of water, and tackling the problem of diffuse pollution of water, especially from agriculture; and

addressing the excess of fishing capacity in relation to the sustainable opportunities that are available, for example through promoting the return of EU stocks to within safe biological limits and keeping them there, by reducing fishing activity through management over several years, reinforced by recovery plans and effective enforcement and control.

Defra’s agenda cannot be achieved without a high profile in EU and international negotiation. Some issues – like climate change – are inherently global and must be pursued at a global level.

Many of the policies which affect our strategic priorities – like Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform, or environmental measures – depend on EU decisions; we need to ensure that our interests – like our concerns about better regulation – are energetically pursued when these are negotiated. We need partnerships with other countries, for example to promote environmental technologies. And we need to build alliances in Council negotiations to secure particular objectives – on CAP reform.

For example we must work for greater coherence between the EU’s internal and external policies, notably seeking changes in the CAP and trade policies to support our World Summit on Sustainable Development and World Trade
Organisation commitments. And we have to ensure that we work effectively alongside new EU partners and in the EU’s developing institutional framework.

Three milestones in 2003–06 will be: the completion of the current CAP reform negotiations; the final stages of the current round of WTO negotiations; and the UK’s Presidency of the EU in 2005. These affect the whole range of Defra’s interests and reflect the importance of an effective, unified approach to EU and international affairs.
Leading across Government
The evidence for poor economic and social conditions in some rural areas is both compelling and measurable. Our target is to lay solid foundations to achieve sustainable and long-term regeneration in these areas by:

- focusing economic instruments more effectively on areas suffering market failures through Regional Development Agency activity, improved business support and advice, and improved workforce training and education;
- taking action on the sustainable farming and food strategy;
- taking local and regional community regeneration measures as the fishing industry restructures;
- securing benefits from new technologies such as broadband to enable business growth; and
- developing social enterprise as a regeneration tool in disadvantaged areas.

This is a major challenge. We will focus on key areas where we can make progress to ensure that public services meet the needs of the majority of rural residents, and that these services meet the particular needs of the most disadvantaged in rural communities.

A key focus will be improvements to specific services where there are particular rural challenges for delivery. These services are:

- healthcare, where we have to work nationally and regionally to counter health inequalities;
- post-16 education and training where we must reach those trapped in a cycle of poor skills, poor expectations and poor employment by working more closely with business and by adapting approaches to training provision;
- public and community transport where we must use our own Countryside Agency programmes and work across government to maximise the benefits from current programmes so that they reach those most in need;
● access to cash where the challenge is to work with Government departments, banks and others to extend the availability and accessibility of bank accounts and extend community finance; and

● access to public services via the internet where we must secure wide benefits and accessibility to this increasingly important means of delivery.

**Priority 2. To develop the capacity of rural communities to deliver local improvements.**

Many rural needs and problems must be solved locally. However, the capacity of some rural communities to do this is limited, so the way to enable action is often through a catalyst such as a local entrepreneur, voluntary sector or local authority facilitation or assistance to link them to people who can help. We will therefore help by:

● providing additional support to improve the ability of the voluntary sector to support individuals and communities that most need help;

● succeeding with our Countryside Agency-run Vital Villages programme which funds parish plans to help communities to identify their needs and provides grants for local services and community transport; and

● launching the Quality Parish initiative.

**Priority 3. To develop the value of the countryside.**

The foot-and-mouth disease outbreak underlined the economic importance of countryside leisure and recreation. When visitors stayed away, rural businesses and communities suffered from the transfer to urban-based activity. We will:

● deliver the Countryside and Rights of Way Act provision to substantially extend access to the countryside by 2005;

● work with Regional Development Agencies, local partners and business to identify economic opportunities arising from countryside recreation and leisure for tourism, building on experience in National Parks where we have established a Sustainability Fund; and
work with the Department of Health and agencies to extend the health walks concept so that people have access to, and doctors can prescribe, fixed routes to encourage exercise on health grounds and as part of convalescence regimes.

**Priority 4. To ensure that policies and programmes are fit for purpose.**

We want to ensure that Government is both better informed and more responsive to the needs of rural communities by:

- embedding rural objectives in domestic Government policy with clear rural targets for the key strands of Government policy through continued rural proofing across government and a review of the Rural White Paper which is to be completed by Winter 2003;

- better policy and programme development through the creation of a structured and regularly updated evidence base on all key rural economic, social and environmental drivers;

- strengthening our partnerships with Regional Development Agencies, local government and the private and voluntary sector to tackle social exclusion and economic failure;

- make a success of the new National and Regional Rural Forums as conduits for rural interests to guide Government policy; and

- improving delivery arrangements for policy and programmes in rural areas; we have established a Review Team led by Lord Haskins, the outcome of which will be agreed by summer 2004.
Achieving our objectives
Countries around the world are responding to the challenge of climate change by taking action to fulfil the objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) – to stabilise atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations at a safe level. Under the Kyoto Protocol, the EU has agreed that it will cut its overall emissions of greenhouse gases by 8% below 1990 levels over the period 2008–12. This target is legally binding. We are working to implement the UK’s share of the Kyoto target – to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 12.5% – and to move towards our domestic goal of cutting CO2 emissions by 20% by 2010.

We are also beginning to consider how we can make the much deeper cuts in global greenhouse gas emissions that are needed in the longer term. The Energy White Paper, Our Energy Future – creating a low carbon economy published in February 2003, committed us to putting the UK on a path towards a reduction of CO2 emissions of some 60% from current levels by about 2050.

We will be working with Department for Trade and Industry (DTI), Department for Transport (DfT) and other departments to achieve this and the other goals set out in the White Paper.

Defra’s objective is to protect and improve the rural, urban, marine and global environment, and lead integration of these with other policies across government and internationally.

Our targets are:

- to work with the Department of Trade and Industry to improve the environment and the sustainable use of natural resources, including through the use of energy-saving technologies, to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 12.5% from 1990 levels and moving towards a 20% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2010; and
- reduce fuel poverty among vulnerable households by improving the energy efficiency of 600,000 homes between 2001 and 2004.
Chapter 3

We will:

● work with the DTI in 2003 to update emissions projections in time to inform the review of the climate change programme;

● review formally in 2004 the climate change programme, *Climate Change: the UK Programme*, published in November 2000;

● publish the *UK Greenhouse Gas Inventory* annually; and

● publish by 2006, the *UK’s Fourth National Communication to the UNFCCC* providing details of UK greenhouse gas emission projections and progress towards the Kyoto target and domestic CO₂ goal.

Priority 1.
To monitor and co-ordinate actions across all sectors and all of Government.

We will:

● work with the DTI to achieve the target that 10% of electricity should be generated from renewables by 2010 and implement a Combined Heat and Power Strategy to help meet the target to achieve an installed capacity of at least 10,000 Mwe of good quality Combined Heat and Power (CHP) by 2010 and to boost the CHP industry, as set out in the Energy White Paper, *Our Energy Future – creating a low carbon economy*;

● lead climate change agreements in energy intensive business sectors that have agreed to meet challenging targets for improving energy efficiency or reducing greenhouse gas emissions;

Priority 2.
To pursue actions across major sectors.

We will:

Figure 1: UK emissions of greenhouse gases 1990–2001 and targets for 2008–12.
● support the UK’s ground-breaking greenhouse gas emissions trading scheme and ensure a smooth transition to the forthcoming EU scheme, including setting targets in the National Allocation Plan;

● work with the DfT on measures in the 10-Year Plan for Transport to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and emissions of pollutants which affect local air quality; and

● continue working with industry on appliance standards and labelling, energy efficient appliances and other domestic energy efficiency programmes.

We will continue to encourage the public and private sectors to assess the impacts of climate change and develop cost-effective ways of adapting through the UK Climate Impacts Programme and the interdepartmental process on adapting to climate change, as well as by implementing the recommendations of the report *The Impacts of Climate Change: the implications for Defra* published in February 2003.

Later in 2003, the European Commission’s proposals for a new regime to regulate chemicals will be published. Agreement and implementation of the new regime will be undoubtedly controversial with industry and environmental interests alike. But finally there is a real prospect of an effective Europe-wide method of hazard and risk assessment for the many thousands of chemicals in regular commercial use whose impacts on health and the environment are insufficiently well understood. Against this background, the existing UK Chemicals Strategy and the work of the Chemicals Stakeholder Forum will be confirmed or changed.
Achieving our objectives
The Government launched its Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food in December 2002. The long-term vision is of sustainable, successful and competitive farming and food industries, making a valuable and valued contribution to the sustainable development of our nation. Placing sustainable development at the heart of our vision means we will:

- deliver more customer-focused and competitive farming and food industries;
- improve the environmental performance of farming and food;
- deliver improvements in nutrition, occupational health, and food safety; and
- work with other departments to deliver improvements in nutrition, occupational health and food safety.

We will:

- encourage best practice, waste reduction, improved information flow and co-operation between farmers and between different parts of the food chain; work with and support the Food Chain Centre, English Farming and Food Partnerships and the Red Meat Industry Forum; support the Office of Fair Trading’s work on the code of practice for how large supermarkets deal with their suppliers, and seek to broaden adherence to its principles;
- support producers’ efforts to increase their share of the value added to farm products; strengthen support for quality regional food and deliver our Organic Action Plan; support assurance schemes such as the Red Tractor Priority 1. A more effective food chain.
in order to make their operation more efficient and speed their development;

- provide financial support through grant schemes for a wide range of measures to improve competitiveness; and

- work with the industry to develop a comprehensive sustainability strategy for the food industry.

Priority 2.
To influence the global context of the food chain.

We will:

- work towards a good outcome in the World Trade Organisation Ministerial meeting in Mexico in September 2003 to reduce trade-distorting support and protection; and

- work for further reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, including supporting the general direction of the European Commission's proposals for 'decoupling' farm support from production and shifting the emphasis of support away from production to rural development and environmental programmes, and press for reform of market regimes for cereals, sugar, tobacco and dairy.

Priority 3.
To enhance the environment through farming.

We will:

- act to reduce agriculture's negative impacts on the environment, by regulating in an effective and proportionate way, considering the use of economic instruments, ensuring that farmers have access to the information they need and by beginning to develop a more joined-up, whole-farm approach to contacts between government and farmers; and

- put in place positive incentives to enable farmers to enhance the countryside and the farmed environment; pilot a new approach to support for the agri-environment, based on an entry-level broadly based scheme with simple rules and procedures, that if successful, will be rolled out across England from 2005.
Priority 4.  To invest in people and knowledge for the future.

We will:

- work with industry and key partners to ensure that those who work in the industry can acquire the skills they need, starting with a review of learning opportunities for rural businesses, reporting in December 2003;
- invest in a substantial programme of research and promote technology transfer; establish a Research Priorities Group to advise on strategic priorities; continue to pilot a network of demonstration farms during 2003 to promote best practice and encourage new ways of working; and
- work to remove barriers to new farmers; to ensure a thriving tenanted sector; and to improve health and safety at work.

Priority 5.  To achieve healthy communities.

We will:

- work with the Department of Health and the Food Standards Agency to promote better links between food and health, through the development of a Food and Health Action Plan;
- develop a new Strategy for Animal Health and Welfare to ensure the high standards that are necessary (see Chapter 5);
- work to improve the integration of farming and food with the wider rural economy, including by helping businesses adapt to new opportunities;
- maximise the contribution that agriculture makes towards rural communities; and
- develop a new Plant Health Strategy to safeguard the crops sector and native flora.
Achieving our objectives
Animal health and welfare – an evolving strategy

The Government is currently consulting on a more strategic and all-embracing approach to animal health and welfare. The consultation document launched in January 2003 invites views on what a strategy for animal health and welfare in Great Britain should contain. Animal health and the way in which animals are treated is of increasing concern to the owners of animals, veterinarians, consumers, members of the public and the Government alike. In recent years we have seen only too clearly how animal diseases can be a threat to people’s health, and the serious impact that they can have on the rural economy and people’s everyday lives.

Our current priorities are to:

- respond promptly to all notifications of suspect cases of BSE by visiting 98% of the cases no later than the next day;
- carry out an effective programme of monitoring conditions in plants rendering Specified Risk Materials by carrying out 98% of weekly inspections;
- test 18,000 feed samples per year and investigate whether any sample contains mammalian or other processed animal protein that breeches the feed ban;
- identify the latest offspring of suspect BSE cases and exclude them from the food chain within two days of the case being reported;
- promote high welfare standards and to deal promptly with all cases of unnecessary suffering or distress found by investigating 90% of reports of suspected adverse farm animal welfare within one working day; attending 25% of market sale days; and examining 10% of export journeys of farm livestock;
- improve the identification and traceability of livestock: by upgrading and providing farmer access to the Cattle Traceability System by the end of 2004; by extending this or developing new systems progressively

Defra’s objective 6 is to protect the public’s interest in relation to environmental impacts and health, and ensure high standards of animal health and welfare.

Our target is to protect public health and ensure high standards of animal welfare by reducing:

- the annual incidence of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) to less than 30 cases by normal surveillance by 2006; and
- the time taken to clear up cases of poor welfare in farmed animals by 5% by March 2004.
to capture electronic identification and movements of sheep (and possibly other species) in line with EU requirements by March 2006;

● continue to increase the resistance of national sheep flock to scrapie through the National Scrapie Plan; and

● scale up the Tuberculosis (TB) in Cattle Surveillance Programme to recover ground lost as a result of the foot-and-mouth disease epidemic, and strengthen TB control in line with EU obligations.

In our strategy consultation we set out a draft vision that we want to have achieved in 10 years’ time.

As we develop our plans for 2003–06 we will draw on this vision prior to publishing our strategy later in 2003.

The contents of our strategy are likely to reflect the following issues.

Consistently high standards of animal health and welfare:

● healthy and protected animals – on the farm, in the wild and in the home;

● animal welfare practices enhanced and promoted;

● ‘disease-free’ status against highly infectious diseases and the restoration of the UK’s international animal health position;

● adaptability and understanding of the changing environment and the threats this can impose on animal health and welfare;

● animal owners and Government can each take an appropriate level of responsibility for animal health;

● the right balance between the partners in animal health and welfare as to how the costs are met;

● an active role in shaping and leading EU and international agendas on animal health and welfare; and

● responsible use of veterinary medicines.

Improved public health through:

● reducing carriage of food-borne pathogens by food-producing animals;

● anticipating potential major food scares from animal products or any other animal-related public health surprises;

● a better informed and more effective livestock industry which is:
  ● highly skilled;
  ● efficient, sustainable and profitable;
● applying best practice in disease prevention (biosecurity), whether through assurance and health schemes or in other ways;
● aware of its role in producing safe food;
● working closely with private veterinary practices;
● set in the context of a thriving countryside and rural economy; and
● aware and appreciative of the widest impacts of animal health and welfare on society and our natural resources, biodiversity, environment etc.

Capacity to deal swiftly and effectively with disease emergency:

● improved and transparent handling of animal disease outbreaks; and

● a reduced level of international threat to animal health, and more effective and greater awareness of import controls.

A policy framework which allows:

● Government intervention that is clear and justified;

● regulation kept to the minimum necessary and appropriately enforced; and

● clear strategies for major diseases to be agreed with stakeholders.

Professional veterinary services which are:

● skilled to support animal health and welfare best practice;

● used by livestock keepers to promote health as well as respond to disease or welfare problems; and

● joined-up in working with the State Veterinary Service, the Veterinary Laboratories Agency, the Meat Hygiene Service and private veterinary practices.

Use of science to ensure:

● policy is evidence-based and scientifically informed;

● research is targeted on priority areas;

● veterinary surveillance is targeted on priority areas; and

● an active horizon-scanning programme.
Achieving our objectives
Less waste and more recycling

Defra’s objective 5 is to promote sustainable management and prudent use of natural resources domestically and internationally.

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

The waste that we generate represents one of the major environmental challenges facing Britain today. England recycles or composts just 12% of its household waste – one of the lowest rates in Europe – and the Government has set a target that this rate should rise to 25% by 2005/06.

In 2000, the Government published a Waste Strategy which set out a vision of sustainable waste management in England and Wales, and offered an overview of waste policy and the tools we could use to tackle the problems of waste. Last year, the Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit produced a report – *Waste Not, Want Not* – looking at what further steps could be taken to achieve the targets set out in *Waste Strategy 2000*. This reiterated the economic as well as the environmental benefits of acting now: waste volume will double and disposal costs will increase by £1.6bn per year by 2020, unless action is taken.

The report made a number of recommendations, and the Government has already acted on some of these. In his Pre-Budget Report in November, the Chancellor proposed:

- raising the level of Landfill Tax to a medium to long-term level of £35 per tonne from 2005/06, thus providing an incentive for industry and local authorities to develop alternatives to landfill, and in recognition of the long-term environmental costs caused by landfill;
- reform of the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme; about one-third of funding (around £47m) will be made available through a re-formed tax credit scheme for spending on local environment projects; the remaining £100m in 2003/4 will be allocated to public spending to encourage sustainable waste management; and
- a study to bring together the literature and evidence on the relative health and environmental effects of different waste management options.

There were over 30 other recommendations to consider, and the Government will shortly publish its response to these, setting out whether, and how, these recommendations will be taken forward.

This will be an important next step if the growth in waste is not to outstrip the growth in recycling. It helps to address the position that 25% of local authorities expect that they will not meet their statutory recycling targets. A major increase in recycling is a crucial first step for the credibility of the Government’s environmental policy and to meet the diversion requirements set out in the Landfill Directive.

Defra’s aim, is to ensure:

- effective partnership between local and central government;
unfettered development and take-up 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.

Defra has five broad sets of targets it will focus on meeting. These are:

- landfill Directive Article 5 targets;

- other EU Waste Directives and future targets under the 6th Environmental Action Programme;

- waste recovery, recycling and composting targets; and

- waste target to reduce the landfiling of commercial and industrial waste;

- radioactive substances.

Resources will be required for both Defra and local authorities. Resources are required for the package of strategic measures in response to the Strategy Unit Report. Funds need to be raised by local authorities in order to meet any increases in the level of Landfill Tax, and to meet their ongoing responsibilities to cope with rising volumes of waste.

**Landfill Directive Article 5 targets:**

- by 2010 to reduce biodegradable municipal waste landfilled to 75% of that produced in 1995;

- by 2013 to reduce biodegradable municipal waste landfilled to 50% of that produced in 1995; and

- by 2020 to reduce biodegradable municipal waste landfilled to 35% of that produced in 1995.

**Other EU Waste Directives and future targets under the 6th Environmental Action Programme:**

A framework through the 6th Environmental Action Programme which may include:

- specific targets in the thematic strategies;

- the Waste Framework Directive in relation to non-natural agricultural waste, mining and quarrying wastes;

- amendments to the Hazardous Waste Directive;

- the Waste Oils Directive;

- the Waste Electrical and Electronics Directive;

- the Batteries Directive;

- the Packaging Directive;

- the Packaging Regulations;

- the End of Life Vehicles Directive; and

- the Mining Wastes Directive.
Waste recovery, recycling and composting targets:

- to recover value from 45% of municipal waste by 2010, at least 30% through recycling or composting;
- to recover value from two-thirds of municipal waste by 2015, at least half of that through recycling or composting, and to go beyond this in the longer term;
- to recycle or compost at least 25% of household waste by 2005;
- to recycle or compost at least 30% of household waste by 2010; and
- to recycle or compost at least 33% of household waste by 2015.

Waste target to reduce the landfilling of commercial and industrial waste:

- by 2005 to reduce the amount of industrial and commercial waste landfilled to 85% of 1998 levels.

Radioactive substances – over the next three years:

We will take forward the process, mapped out in our consultation document Managing Radioactive Waste Safely and subsequent announcements, leading to a new policy for dealing with our legacy of nuclear waste. Working through a new independent Committee on Radioactive Waste Management, we will use a wide variety of means to engage the public and consult all shades of opinion on one of the most difficult, sensitive but vital of all environmental issues. We will first determine the best technical solution before moving to discussions about citing of processes or stores.
The capacity to deliver
Defra, in common with the whole public service, is operating in a climate of rapid and fundamental change. This means transforming the organisation into one that is flexible, sees the bigger picture and is focused on outcomes that make a real difference to our customers, stakeholders and staff. We must have the skills and organisation to deliver the priorities described in these pages and to be innovative in our work.

What success will look like for Defra

**Delivery agent**

‘Defra is achieving delivery – in particular against its strategic priorities and Public Service Agreement targets’

**Our people**

‘Defra staff are supported by effective leadership, actively seek better ways to deliver Defra’s outputs and develop, focus and exploit their skills to make maximum impact on the achievement of Defra priorities’

**Stakeholders**

‘Stakeholders regard Defra as an effective partner and trust in our ability to perform and deliver desired outcomes’

**Customers**

‘Customers see us a responsive service provider, focused on delivering results’

Defra’s capacity to deliver
For Defra, the next three years will be critical in setting an improved standard for how we go about our work. Our programme of reform is based on:

- building, and improving upon, a robust evidence base – including science, economics and social science – to underpin sound policy-making as an integral component of our reform programme; Defra will publish its Science and Innovation Strategy for the period 2003–06, by May 2003;

- establishing a framework to reduce and manage risk, through better understanding and anticipation;

- working from ‘decision to delivery’, so that we are effective, secure efficiency savings, and have a better focus on outcomes and customer service;

- closely aligning our business systems with our strategy and modernising them so that they are appropriate for Defra;

- investing in a strategy for workforce development and a programme designed to strengthen leadership skills; and

- being sustainable in our own use of resources within Defra.
Aim

Sustainable development, which means a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come, including:

- a better environment at home and internationally, and sustainable use of natural resources;
- economic prosperity through sustainable farming, fishing, food, water and other industries that meet consumers’ requirements; and
- thriving economies and communities in rural areas and a countryside for all to enjoy.

Objectives and performance targets

1. Promote sustainable development across government and the country as a whole as measured by achieving positive trends in the Government’s headline indicators of sustainable development.

Objective 1: protect and improve the rural, urban, marine and global environment, and lead integration of these with other policies across government and internationally.

2. Improve the environment and the sustainable use of natural resources, including through the use of energy-saving technologies, to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 12.5% from 1990 levels and moving towards a 20% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2010.

3. Care for our natural heritage, make the countryside attractive and enjoyable for all, and preserve biological diversity by:

- reversing the long-term decline in the number of farmland birds by 2020, as measured annually against underlying trends;
- bringing 95% of all nationally important wildlife sites into favourable condition by 2010; and
- opening up public access to mountain, moor, heath and down, and registered common land by the end of 2005.
Objective 2: enhance opportunity and tackle social exclusion in rural areas.

4. Reduce the gap in productivity between the least well performing quartile of rural areas and the English median by 2006, and improve the accessibility of services for rural people.

Objective 3: promote a sustainable, competitive and safe food supply chain which meets consumers’ requirements.

Objective 4: promote sustainable, diverse, modern and adaptable farming through domestic and international actions.

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

Objective 5: promote sustainable management and prudent use of natural resources domestically and internationally.

6. Enable 25% of household waste to be recycled or composted by 2005/06.

7. Reduce fuel poverty among vulnerable households by improving the energy efficiency of 600,000 homes between 2001 and 2004.

Objective 6: protect the public’s interest in relation to environmental impacts and health, and ensure high standards of animal health and welfare.

8. Improve air quality by meeting our National Air Quality Strategy objectives for carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, particles, sulphur dioxide, benzene and 1,3-butadiene – a joint target with the Department for Transport.

9. Protect public health and ensure high standards of animal welfare by reducing:

- the annual incidence of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) to less than 30 cases by 2006; and
- by 5% the time taken to clear up cases of poor welfare in farmed animals by March 2004.

Value for money

10. Achieve a reduction of 10% of the unit cost of administering CAP payments by 2004/05 and an increase to 95% electronic service delivery capability for such payments by 31 March 2005.
Chapter 1

Annex two

Defra organisation

Ministerial team

Margaret Beckett Secretary of State – Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
The Secretary for State has overall responsibility for all Departmental issues on the environment, food (including agriculture, horticulture and fisheries) and rural affairs. Mrs Beckett represents the UK at the EU Agriculture and Fisheries Council and at the EU Environment Council. She leads for the UK in international negotiations on sustainable development and climate change.

Michael Meacher Minister of State – Environment and Agri-Environment
Climate Change • Horizontal and International Environmental issues • GMOs • Plant Health, Plant Variety Rights and Seeds • Agri-Environment, Non-Food Crops, Organics • Chemicals • Waste (including Radioactive Waste and Incineration issues) • Chair of Green Ministers (ENV(G)) • Business and the Environment • Environment Agency

Alun Michael Minister of State – Rural Affairs and Urban Quality of Life
Rural Affairs (Rural Economies and Communities, Rural White Paper Implementation, Chairs Rural Affairs Forum for England) • Hunting with Dogs • Inland Waterways, Countryside Agency and Rural Payments Agency • Landscape, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty • Access, Rights of Way and Commons, Horse issues • England Rural Development Programme • Urban Liveability issues • Lead Defra Minister on Planning, Regional and Local Government issues • Environmental Liability, Air Quality, Noise • Department Green Minister • Smart Regulation

Elliot Morley Parliamentary Secretary (Commons) – Fisheries, Water and Nature
Nature Conservation and Biodiversity (including Marine) • Water (including the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science) • Fisheries • Floods • Forestry • Animal Health and Welfare (including the Veterinary Laboratory Agency and Veterinary Medicines Directorate)

Larry Whitty Parliamentary Secretary (Lords) – Farming, Food and Sustainable Energy
Sustainable Farming (including Horticulture) and the Food Industry • Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) • Trade issues • Science issues (including the Central Science Laboratory) • Pesticides policy (including the Pesticides Safety Directorate) • Transport and the Environment • Energy Efficiency and other Energy issues • Kew Gardens, Horticulture Research International and Covent Garden Market Authority
Annex two

Defra management board

Brian Bender
Permanent Secretary

Mark Addison
Director General
Operations & Service Delivery

Andrew Burchell
Finance Director

Howard Dalton
Chief Scientific Adviser

Lucian Hudson
Communications Director

Andy Lebrecht
Director General
Food, Farming & Fisheries

Donald Macrae
Solicitor and
Director General Legal Service

Francesca Okosi
Director of Change Policy and Corporate Strategy Unit

Jim Scudamore
Chief Veterinary Officer and Director General Animal Health

Bill Stow
Director General Environment

Anna Walker
Director General Land Use & Rural Affairs

Alison Huxtable
Non-executive Director

Elizabeth Ransom
Non-executive Director

Richard Wakeford
Non-executive Director