The Government has set a target that 10% of electricity should be obtained from renewable sources by the year 2010. The UK’s first wood fuelled electricity generating plant is at Eggborough, North Yorkshire.
Aim, strategic priorities and Departmental structure

Defra works for the essentials of life – food, air, land, water, people, animals and plants. Our remit is the pursuit of sustainable development – weaving together economic, social and environmental concerns. Defra therefore brings all aspects of the environment, rural matters, farming and food production together, is a focal point for all rural policy, relating to people, the economy and the environment; and has roles in both European Union and global policy making, so that its work has a strong international dimension.

Aim

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 economics and communities in rural areas and a countryside for all to enjoy.

Strategic priorities

Defra has five strategic priorities which underpin its overarching aim of promoting sustainable development:

- **Climate change and energy** – making a full contribution, domestically and internationally, to addressing the long-term threats presented by climate change and unsustainable energy use, and to ensure adequate mitigation of the consequences which are already unavoidable;

- **Sustainable consumption and production** – breaking the link between economic growth and environmental degradation and resource use through promoting and enabling more sustainable patterns of consumption and production;

- **Protecting the countryside and natural resource protection** – creating a robust policy framework and evidence base in order to promote the sustainable use and enhancement of the country’s natural heritage and ecosystems;

- **Sustainable rural communities** – encouraging sustainable regeneration in disadvantaged rural areas, promoting social inclusion and reducing deprivation, ensuring higher quality, more accessible public services to rural communities; and
• a sustainable farming and food sector including animal health and welfare
  – helping create a sustainable farming and food supply chain serving the market
  and the environment; putting in place systems to reduce risks of animal diseases,
  and being ready to control them when they occur.

Ministers have agreed that, to make progress against these strategic priorities, it will be
necessary to secure a number of key outcomes\(^4\), the majority of which are expressed as
Public Service Agreements targets. In addition, the Department recognises that a significant
part of its work is concerned with preparedness for emergencies and contingencies.

**Five Year Strategy**

Defra’s *Five Year Strategy, Delivering the Essentials of Life*\(^5\) builds on the work the
Department has been doing for some time to progressively clarify the Department’s purpose,
and defining its priorities. Its themes and outcomes are in line with the Public Service
Agreement\(^6\) targets agreed in the 2004 Spending Review. The document sets out areas
where additional emphasis is needed and where, if Defra is to make real progress, it needs to
go further than Public Service Agreements targets (an example is the sustainable balance
between supply and demand for water, where the Department has clear objectives but no
Public Service Agreement target).

**Departmental Reform Programme**

Defra is developing a new fit for purpose Department which will be able to deliver its
*Five Year Strategy*. This is also being informed by thinking across Government on reform and
professionalisation, including the Professional Skills for Government work. The three
programmes driving internal change are Defra's Delivery Strategy, the Policy Centre Review
Programme, and the Corporate Centre Programme. Further information on Defra’s
Departmental Reform Programme is available in Chapter 7.

**Accountability**

There are three main pillars of the Department’s accountability arrangements:

- the Secretary of State has overall statutory and political accountability to Parliament
  for all matters associated with the Department. She determines the policy
  framework within which the Department operates, agrees the Department’s role in
  meeting the Government’s objectives and is accountable for delivery of the
  Department’s Public Service Agreement;

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\(^4\) Outcomes sought under each strategic priority can be found at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/5year-
strategy/index.htm .

\(^5\) The *Five Year Strategy* can be found on the Defra website at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/5year-strategy/
5year-strategy.pdf

\(^6\) Details of which can be found on online at: www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/busplan/busplan.htm
• the Permanent Secretary as Head of the Department and Principal Accounting Officer has personal responsibility for the overall organisation, management and staffing of the Department and for Department-wide procedures in financial and other matters. The Accounting Officer has personal responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which she is accountable; and

• the Management Board (chaired by the Permanent Secretary) is responsible for corporate strategic leadership of the Department. Managers and staff at all levels have the responsibility for delivering the Department’s objectives.
The Department’s Ministers to May 2006

Rt Hon Margaret Beckett MP
Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Elliot Morley MP
Minister of State for Climate Change and the Environment

Jim Knight MP
Minister for Rural Affairs, Landscape and Biodiversity

Lord Bach
Minister for Sustainable Farming and Food

Ben Bradshaw MP
Minister for Local Environment, Marine and Animal Welfare

Further detail on the Ministers’ portfolios can be found on-line at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/ministers/index.asp
The Department’s Ministers from May 2006

Rt Hon David Miliband MP
Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Ian Pearson MP
Minister of State

Lord Rooker
Minister of State (Lords)

Ben Bradshaw MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Commons)

Barry Gardiner MP
Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Commons)

Further detail on the Ministers’ portfolios can be found on-line at: http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/ministers/index.asp
The Department’s Management Board

Bill Stow
Director General, Environment

Andrew Burchell
Chief Operating Officer

Andy Lebrecht
Director General, Sustainable Farming, Food and Fisheries

Ursula Brennan
Director General, Natural Resources and Rural Affairs

Donald Macrae
Solicitor and Director General, Legal Services

Ian Grattidge
Director Finance, Planning and Resources

Debby Reynolds
Chief Veterinary Officer and Director General, Animal Health and Welfare

Prof. Howard Dalton
Chief Scientific Adviser
Director General
Science, Economics and Statistics

Bill Griffiths
Non-executive Director

Elizabeth Ransom
Non-executive Director

Further details of the Management Board and meetings can be found on the Defra website:
The Marine Fisheries Agency was established in October 2005.