




The Sustainable Development Action Plan

2004-2007



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

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‘sustainable development is not an option that will go away - it is the only way forward’

Rhodri Morgan AM, First Minister for Wales

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Foreword

Since our first Sustainable Development Scheme was made in November 2000 the Welsh Assembly Government and its partners have learned much about sustainable development and the challenge of genuinely integrating it into everything we do at all levels of government and civil society.

This new Action Plan addresses the weaknesses identified by the Effectiveness Report that we published last year and sets out key actions that we believe will constitute a 'step change' in delivering sustainable development in Wales.

Multi-disciplinary stakeholder events and a formal period of consultation revealed a high level of support for the draft Plan but respondents asked for further work on areas such as timescales and targets, resources, health, transport, sustainable consumption (as well as production), energy efficiency and renewable technologies.

I would like to thank the many organisations and individuals who have given generously of their time, ideas and enthusiasm throughout the process. We have used this input to strengthen the plan throughout, especially in putting in clearer dates and actions. We have also used it to generate a new set of top ten commitments, which I believe reflect the degree of leadership that our unique legal duty demands of us.

These actions are:

- *By 2010 100% of electricity used in all Assembly buildings will be supplied from renewable sources or good quality embedded generation; and we shall work towards a similar figure for other public sector buildings.*
- *The Assembly Government, its agencies and the NHS in Wales will report annually on the use of energy in its estates.*
- *From January 2005 we will specify in all contracts for new or refurbished public buildings procured by or for the Welsh Assembly Government, that the design achieves as a minimum, the BREEAM 'very good' standard, or equivalent and the BREEAM 'excellent' standard wherever possible. We will work with Local Authorities to help them achieve similar standards for new and refurbished public buildings for which they are responsible.*
- *By 2006 we will have established pilot projects that explore the potential of using renewable energy solutions in our policies and programmes aimed at tackling fuel poverty amongst low income vulnerable households, particularly those unable to benefit from traditional improvement solutions.*
- *The Assembly and its agencies will encourage the development of an indigenous microgeneration "renewables" industry in Wales, with a particular focus on opportunities for Small and Medium Enterprises, Welsh Development Agency, Carbon Trust and Energy Savings Trust, and where appropriate, other renewables focused organisations, to work together closely to provide a joined up approach*

- *We will commission a project to investigate the benefits and barriers to promoting the uptake of alternative fuels in Wales, such as biofuels, biogas, natural gas and hydrogen.*
- *We will work with Local Education Authorities and school governing bodies so that, as they come up for renewal, all specifications for contracts for school meals address issues of health and nutrition and food seasonality.*
- *We will introduce a targeted top tier agri-environment scheme to encourage co-operative action, bringing about wider environmental benefits in the countryside across farm boundaries.*
- *With our Advisory Panel we will produce a Wales-wide strategy for Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship by Spring 2005.*
- *By Spring 2005 we will also introduce the ECOHomes environmental assessment process and set energy efficiency standards significantly above that currently required by building regulations for all new homes built in Wales by Registered Social Landlords using Social Housing Grant.*



Carwyn Jones AM

Introduction

The National Assembly for Wales is required by law to make a Scheme stating how it will promote sustainable development in the exercise of its functions. The Assembly is required to publish annual reports on progress in implementing the Scheme, and every four years following each Assembly election an additional report must be published on the effectiveness of what has been done. In the light of this a decision must be taken – after consultation – on whether the Scheme should be remade or revised.

The Assembly's first scheme, *Learning to Live Differently*, was adopted in November 2000. In October 2003, following the Assembly elections, we published two documents, an independent report on the effectiveness of our original Scheme and a consultation paper on how it should be revised. Following that consultation, the Assembly adopted a revised Sustainable Development Scheme *Starting to Live Differently* on 16th March 2004.

The Scheme says what commitments the whole Assembly is making towards sustainable development, the principles it will observe, and some of the processes it will apply to promoting sustainable development in all its work.

The plan presented here says how the Welsh Assembly Government will implement the commitments in the new Scheme. It addresses issues identified in the effectiveness report about the way the Assembly works and the relative lack of real world change to date. It also draws on responses to our consultations on revising the Scheme and on the comments received on the draft Action Plan which issued for consultation on 22 March 2004.

This Action Plan is intended to:

- Implement the new Sustainable Development Scheme;
- Stand as a formal addition to the Welsh Assembly Government's strategic agenda *Wales: A Better Country*;
- Fulfil commitments we have made internationally through our membership of the sustainable development networks;
- Form part of the framework for the sustainable development strategy of the UK;
- Complement the first Wales Spatial Plan;
- Ensure our progress is kept under review.

The Plan does not repeat commitments given in existing policy documents but does indicate the main actions that have been taken in each policy area. Sustainable development as a whole depends on the actions we as a government are taking to promote a strong and prosperous economy and healthy living, to tackle inequality for reasons of race, gender and disability and to address poverty and lack of opportunity through our Social Justice agenda. It also requires actions by all sections of society. We will not succeed in resolving any of these issues if we continue to pretend that they exist as single and unconnected entities. We need to recognise the connections between them and strive collectively to find solutions that address all of them.

The Action Plan is based on existing powers and the Assembly's proposed budget for 2005-6 onwards. If there are opportunities in the future to undertake further actions, we will do so and report on them through our annual updates.

The International Context

Increasing numbers of people throughout the world are living better than ever before, but very real poverty remains a problem even in some of the richest countries, and abject poverty blights the lives of millions of people in the poorest. Though some environmental problems have been tackled very successfully, nations are still meeting their overall needs in such inefficient ways that we are threatening the survival of species and causing unnaturally fast climate change. Both effects will rebound on us all if we fail to act.

Meanwhile, globalisation of the world economy means that changes affecting individual companies and countries happen increasingly quickly. This generates wealth but it can also create problems for communities anywhere in the world whose economic base and cultural roots are subject to rapid change, and for environments that are exploited rather than managed.

Halting economic development and globalisation is not a solution, even if it were an option. Poverty can be a cause of environmental degradation as well as an effect of it. What we need to do is harness development and change to help people to find ways of meeting their needs more efficiently and sustaining their identity, whilst seeking to put right the environmental problems we have already created. This is the challenge of sustainable development worldwide.

The world community is wrestling with this agenda. Through the Rio Earth Summit of 1992, through the Kyoto Treaty on climate change, through the Millennium Development Goals, and through the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, international commitments have been made on:

- reducing greenhouse gas emissions that are driving climate change – including substantially

increasing renewable energy as one of the ways of doing this; and establishing domestic programmes for energy efficiency;

- creating programmes of action on sustainable production and consumption – that is changing the way goods and services are made and influencing what people buy so that their needs can be met with much less impact on the environment and on scarce resources;
- halting the loss of biodiversity world-wide by 2010, and in particular, halting the loss of marine biodiversity and, by 2015, maintaining or starting to restore fish stocks;
- managing woodlands sustainably, with a view to their importance for biodiversity and their role in reducing climate change and its impacts;
- minimising significant adverse effects of chemicals on human health and the environment by 2020;
- by 2015, making progress towards: eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality; reducing child mortality; improving maternal health; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; and developing a global partnership for development;
- respecting human rights and extending public participation in decision-making;
- actively promoting corporate social responsibility;
- increasing education and awareness of sustainable development issues.

Through the Gauteng Declaration of the international Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (NRG4SD), and in

subsequent policy discussion in Perth and Cardiff, the Assembly has expressed its support for these and other international commitments and committed itself to action in areas where Nation States are still struggling to find ways forward.

Six related sustainable development challenges have been identified at European Union level, based on their severity, long-term and pan-European nature:

- Global warming.
- Potential threats to public health stemming from persistent toxic substances, resistance to antibiotics, or food safety risks.
- Poverty and social inclusion.
- The implications of an ageing population.
- Loss of biodiversity in Europe.
- Transport congestion and regional imbalances.

This Action Plan seeks to position Wales against these global and European challenges in the context of the Assembly's duty and scheme. The world is still struggling with these challenges because they demand a degree of integrated vision and direction that is difficult to achieve. We believe places of the scale of Wales are best placed to make these connections and move forward on the international agenda.

What Does This Mean For Wales?

Not all of the commitments outlined above can be addressed effectively at the Wales level. Only international, European Union or UK-level action will suffice for some. However, pursuing the Assembly's vision of a sustainable future for Wales – which is what we are striving to do - will involve action that contributes to many of the global and European commitments, as well as to issues specific

to Wales and to Welsh circumstances. This is what the Assembly's Sustainable Development Scheme has committed us to deliver in this Action Plan.

We also need to be aware of how we are performing in these significant areas. Taking just a few:

- our currently increasing energy output, strengthening heavy industrial base, and increased energy use (for example in transport) mean that, while total greenhouse gas emissions have started to decrease, carbon dioxide emissions are not yet below the baseline set in 1990, and further action is needed to establish a steady downward trend;
- while we led the way in wind energy in the UK in the 1990s, our recent record on increasing renewable energy generation is modest;
- the economy is doing well but too many people are still workless and suffering deprivation;
- we start from a low base on non-industrial energy efficiency because, for example, of the age of our housing stock, though industrial improvements have been significant;
- on some key issues relating to sustainable production and consumption, for instance our record on waste and public transport, we still have a long way to go to catch up with leading European regions, despite the progress we have already made;
- our ecological footprint is too large – we need more than our fair share of the planet's resources to sustain our current standard of living. Rather than reduce that standard of living we need to make sure that we use resources more efficiently;

- our records on entrepreneurship and innovation need to be improved. To achieve our aspirations for a higher value economy we must attract more research and development headquarters with higher value jobs;
- our marine environment is particularly important in European terms;
- promoting good health by influencing its determinants is an area where we are learning much from other parts of Europe and we have started a major new agenda;
- we have a mixed record on biodiversity. Most of our commitments are in place but we are still experiencing a decline;
- we have significant variations in wealth, quality of life and economic activity (reflected in our European Objective One status);
- we face challenges in maintaining communities and the Welsh language in the face of demographic change (such as an ageing population).

The fact that the world community, the European Union and the UK are setting action in hand on these matters will affect the legislative and commercial environment in which companies operate. In the EU, it will also shape the future structural funding post 2006. Those companies and places that are ready to respond creatively will stand to benefit, whereas those that are not will find themselves increasingly vulnerable in the global market place. We need 'Wales plc' to rise to the challenge.

The implications of not addressing these issues would be that we would fail to contribute as we should to solving world-wide problems; we would miss out on the economic opportunities that will be created by nations and regions that do address them successfully; and we would fail to build the sort of Wales we want and that the people of Wales deserve.

The Action Plan is divided into four areas reflecting the key issues that face Wales and the areas where the Assembly Government can make most difference. All these issues must interact and be taken forward coherently to deliver a more sustainable future. Where no specific milestones are set, the actions will be completed by 2007.

Living Differently

Addressing the major structural issues for sustainable development – energy, settlements, natural environment, and production and consumption.

Leadership and Delivery

Creating governance structures and a civil society that can deliver sustainable development.

Making our money talk

Making sure the Assembly and other public sector spending is focused on delivering sustainable development.

Measuring our progress

Testing our progress against new indicators and reporting on progress.



Living Differently

'When you make a mistake, don't look back at it long Mistakes are lessons of wisdom. The past cannot be changed. The future is yet in your power.'

Phyllis Bottome

CLIMATE CHANGE

Playing our full part in reducing the threat posed by climate change by moving to a low carbon economy.

Climate change is the greatest international sustainable development challenge, with enormous consequences for our future lives and livelihoods if we fail to address it. Climate change in many ways goes to the heart of the way we live because it is influenced by our use of energy, natural resources and land in modern society and economy. The goal now is to move towards a `low-carbon` economy. We also need to take action that allows us to adapt to the effects of climate change in its many guises, be it flooding, storm damage, sea level rise or pressure on water resources.

We are working with the UK Government and the other devolved administrations on the review of the UK climate change programme. Although Wales has traditionally been heavily dependent on energy for its industries, it has tremendous natural potential for renewable and alternative energy. We have already set a target of having 10% of our energy from renewable sources by 2010 as part of our contribution to the international goal of reducing emissions by 60% by 2050. Recently issued draft planning guidance on a strategic approach for renewable energy development will significantly contribute to delivering that target.

Moving to a low carbon economy is not enough on its own. It is also vital to conserve Wales' current natural stores of carbon. The overwhelming majority of this – some 500 million tonnes – is in the soil, particularly peaty upland soils, and is at risk of being released to the atmosphere if it dries out.

We will take our work on climate change forward significantly by:

- *implementing the Energy Efficiency Action Plan across all sectors by **November 2004**;*
- *driving forward our clean energy policies in Wales, by publishing by **December 2004** and implementing a clean energy action plan, which will include establishing an increased role for Wales in developing next generation renewables technologies;*
- *developing community renewables and innovative energy projects through stakeholders and agencies with the benefit of European funding support by **January 2005**;*
- *with Carbon Trust Wales, WDA and others, implementing a step change in the adoption of the latest energy efficiency techniques, and small scale renewable energy generation in buildings of all types in Wales. This will build on the Carbon Trust's study of the profile of energy use and carbon emissions in Wales, due in **spring 2005**;*
- *with DTI, Carbon Trust and others, strengthening the knowledge/research base in Wales for emerging marine energy and hydrogen economy systems, including participating in a renewables strategic environmental assessment of Welsh waters – by **mid 2005**;*
- *ensuring that our developing policies on farming, forestry and the countryside, help to conserve the carbon stored in Welsh soils;*
- *ensuring that lighting for trunk roads employs renewable technologies to deliver at least 20% energy saving;*
- *commissioning a study to explore the feasibility of offsetting the carbon generated by induced traffic arising from Assembly road schemes.*

LIVEABLE PLACES, STRONG COMMUNITIES

Rethinking our villages, towns and cities to improve our daily lives and communities and make fewer demands on our natural resources.

The places in which we live shape the way we live our lives. The location of facilities, accessibility to goods and services, and the style of development all condition our lifestyle choices – where we can live, how we travel and shop, where or whether we work and whether we enjoy safety and well-being.

A strong framework is already in place to enable communities to develop more sustainably, including

- new national planning guidance reflecting needs;
- a Transport Framework rooted in principles;
- the Communities First programme working with the most deprived communities to help them to identify and tackle local issues;
- Iaith Pawb, a national plan of actions for a bilingual Wales;
- the creation of a Design Commission; and
- local community strategies.

The Wales Spatial Plan will provide a fresh context for places to develop differently in accordance with their needs and opportunities, and will bind in government funds and services to help deliver these more local visions. The future of both our economy and society rests with our people and our places – people with skills, places that people find attractive to live and work in, and an environment that encourages businesses to prosper.

To help to make our communities exemplars of sustainable development, we will

- **between now and 2007** work with developers, construction clients and funders, the Design Commission for Wales and Constructing Excellence to ensure the built environment meets our sustainable development goals;
- **issue improved Transport Appraisal Guidance early in 2005;**
- **use the sustainable development clause in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act to embed sustainable development in planning policies. Local Development Plans Wales guidance will issue in September 2005, and as Technical Advice Notes are revised they will incorporate sustainable development principles;**
- **formally appraise a revised transport framework for Wales against our sustainable development framework;**
- **encourage National Park Authorities to work with developers to provide small scale, low cost, sustainable housing, within National Parks;**
- **use the introduction of the Strategic Environmental Assessment integrated with Sustainability Appraisal for development plans to ensure wider area issues and linkages are properly addressed.**

OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Regarding our natural resources as our major asset.

In a very basic sense, the soil, water and air of Wales are fundamental to our sustainability. But in a modern economy, these assets are also fundamental not just to life but to our future competitiveness. Tourism is a major economic activity and is dependent on high quality environments. In a world of mobile investment, quality of life is also vital to attracting people and companies. Places that have a high-quality environment and can offer a positive lifestyle with local distinctiveness and character will be those that stand out in an increasingly pressured and homogenised world.

Too many people in Wales still suffer from poor quality environments. The challenge is to ensure that everybody enjoys real local environmental quality.

Farming remains at the heart of land management. *Farming for the Future* has set a vision for sustainable development of our land based industries, supporting high-quality, value-added primary production and processing; a countryside which is rich in bio-diversity; and tourism based on Wales' quality and distinctiveness. The Agri-Food Strategy, Farming Connect and Tir Gofal will remain central to helping farming to adapt so that this vision is turned into reality.

The National Assembly's forest estate (40% of the woodlands of Wales) has been independently assessed and certified as being sustainably managed.

Wales has marine waters rich in biodiversity, improved river quality and much improved air quality. A key remaining challenge is from diffuse sources of pollution such as the collective contribution from agriculture and transport.

To take this agenda forward, we will:

- *take action on diffuse pollution, as we are required to do under the Water Framework Directive, consulting on the issue as it relates to agriculture in the **latter part of 2004**;*
- *have in place by **1 January 2005** Assembly legislation and supporting advice to give effect to the EU Common Agricultural Policy reform package: to make Single Farm Payments to farmers between 1 December 2005 - 30 June 2006, subject to their meeting cross compliance requirements (for example to meet environmental goals);*
- *open for applications in **spring 2005** a new agri-environment scheme, Tir Cynnal. It will offer opportunities for farmers in Wales to engage in agri-environment work to protect the wildlife habitats, traditional landscapes and historic features on their land, and to reduce pollution;*
- *consult on an Environment Strategy in **spring 2005** and publish it in its final form in **autumn 2005**. This will take forward work on the draft soil and biodiversity strategies for Wales;*
- *introduce tougher public health assessments for new land use developments by **end of 2005**;*
- *develop and consult on visions for the future of countryside and landscape zones, contributing to sustainable development in an integrated way. In the light of consultation, the Welsh Assembly Government, the Countryside Council for Wales, the Environment Agency and Forestry Commission Wales will use them to drive forward their work in the implementation of agri-environmental schemes, forestry and woodland practice, grant regimes, planning and regulation. Our Environment Strategy will develop how this will be taken forward.*

- *promote greater use of indigenous Welsh grown timber in construction, initially through the Pren Cymru 'AXIS' ERDF project that aims **by 2006** to develop Welsh timber products for the social housing construction market;*
- *assist private woodland owners in Wales to obtain accreditation for sustainable management through revision of the Forestry Commission Woodland Grant Scheme;*
- *work with partners to develop a framework for integrated management of our marine environment;*
- *implement our woodlands strategy, so that by 2023 50% of the National Assembly's Woodlands will have converted from clear-felling to continuous cover. Clear fell will be replanted with species appropriate to specific sites; taking account of local ecological objectives; the carbon balance and economic potential where that is appropriate; or be left to natural regeneration.*

SUPPORTING WELSH BUSINESS IN SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION

Promoting environmental best practice to companies is already part of the role of the Welsh Development Agency (WDA). WDA along with Wales Trade International also supports and promotes Welsh companies selling environmental goods and services. The Carbon Trust provides business and the public sector with information, advice, practical help and financial support to reduce energy costs and carbon emissions. In 2003 the Welsh Assembly Government issued a Business and Environment Action Plan, setting out briefly what companies could do with our support to improve their environmental credentials. The Wales environmental management accreditation scheme – Green Dragon – allows companies to work towards international accreditation in smaller steps. To support action in the social economy, we have a Social Enterprise Action Plan.

To strengthen this work, we will:

- **over the next 3 years encourage the construction industry to adopt waste minimisation measures to achieve significant reductions in waste generated by design and site operations, by continuing to promote the Assembly sponsored 'Construction Waste Minimisation Good Practice Guide';**
- **from now until February 2006, match fund two 'waste adviser' posts that have been recruited by Arena Network within their Objective One funded Green Dragon project, to provide advice to businesses in the Objective One area. We will explore ways to expand this advice to non Objective One areas;**
- **promote sustainable development to businesses through the use of a diagnostic tool being developed by the WDA in liaison with the Welsh Assembly Government. This tool will be embedded into the WDA's newly established Business Eye web-site and General Business Advisory Service by December 2004;**
- **develop guidance in late 2004 for social enterprise to take a stronger role in sustainable production, for example in renewable energy production, through a sub-group of a capital investment working group;**
- **by the end of 2004, support the establishment of a Constructing Excellence in Wales Benchmarking Club and encourage all sectors of the construction industry to participate in the measurement of performance against industry standard indicators;**
- **launch a second phase Business and Environment Action Plan in 2007, developed with the help of the newly established resource management expert panel;**
- **commission a review of our Waste Strategy in 2007 and identify the further targets and action required to ensure the efficient and sustainable management of waste and resources in Wales.**

REDUCING CONSUMPTION

While Wales does not have the lead on issues such as tax systems that could influence peoples and businesses decisions about consumption, we can give a lead as a supplier of support and advice to companies; and as a buyer of goods and services ourselves, and by offering help and advice to the general public.

Initiatives currently underway include:

- the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme that tackles fuel poverty by providing insulation and heating for vulnerable people;
- the promotion of travel plans for major employers and schools to reduce car commuting;
- the Wales Public Sector Waste Minimisation Campaign, to meet the target of a reduction in waste arisings by 1% per annum.

To strengthen this work, we now propose to:

- **by December 2004**, *promote waste minimisation and recycling to householders through a major media campaign run by the Waste Awareness Wales initiative that is supported by the Assembly Government;*
- **by March 2005** *assist the public sector in Wales to implement the Wales Public Sector Sustainable Waste Management Guidance Manual through the production of a resources pack and the provision of training;*
- *create consumer awareness as part of an overall awareness campaign, building on the study by the Consumer Council and WWF Cymru;*
- *promote information to householders on energy efficiency and renewables within the scope of the Energy Efficiency Action Plan;*



Leadership and Delivery

'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world'

Margaret Meade

CREATING ORGANISATIONAL EXCELLENCE

The Welsh Assembly Government as an organisation will pursue excellence in mainstreaming the principles of sustainable development in all that it does.

The review of the first Sustainable Development Scheme indicated that there had been considerable success in embedding sustainable development in the core Assembly Government policy documents but that understanding of it and its application to policy-thinking within Departments, was still only partial.

Over the life of the first Scheme and Action Plan, the Assembly Government focused on mainstreaming the principles of sustainable development across policies. A Cabinet sub-committee exists to oversee the work and a series of policy reviews have tested current thinking against the wider and longer-term picture offered by sustainable development. To drive this work home, we will:

- **by the end of 2004** set out our future approach to public service delivery in order to link the Assembly's vision to action on the ground;
- ensure sustainable development is embedded in core training programmes and, commencing **December 2004**, include questions about it in annual Assembly Staff Attitude surveys;
- **from January 2005**, measure ourselves against the benchmark organisational standard being developed by Forum for the Future, reinforcing sustainable development as a central driver of our internal change programme, Management Plan and policy planning;
- **from April 2005**, as part of the review of the Assembly's Performance Management System, embed sustainable development into staff appraisal systems through core competencies and objectives;
- **from April 2005**, apply the policy integration tool to all strategic policies to ensure they coherently deliver our strategic vision, publish the results as part of consultations, and keep the tool under review. Also develop a methodology to test the sustainable development aspects of our top level strategies;
- publish the summary assessment of our past allocation of resources against strategic goals undertaken by the 2004 Spending Review.

DELIVERING THROUGH OUR AGENTS

Making our vision for a sustainable Wales the driving principle for our delivery agents.

Most of the Assembly's funding and activity is the day to day responsibility of sponsored bodies, the NHS and local government. The review of the first Scheme indicated a gap between top-level policy intent and delivery. It also showed that Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies (ASPBs) had been slow to implement the requirements placed on them by the first Action Plan.

Since the review, the Assembly Government has announced its intention to bring a number of major sponsored bodies into direct management to ensure that the Government has the tools available to deliver on its commitments.

The wider public sector in Wales is a major employer, landholder and purchaser of goods and services. It has major potential to be an exemplar for sustainable development.

To continue this work we will now:

- *with immediate effect, build on the work of the King's Fund to determine key steps for the NHS in Wales to take forward the agenda; and support the production of a Wales Healthcare Waste Strategy;*
- *by the end of 2005, jointly develop practical guidance and training tailored to individual organisations including the use of integration tools and organisational excellence models.*

DELIVERING WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Helping local government to deliver its role as an enabler for local communities.

The review of the effectiveness of the Sustainable Development Scheme indicated a lack of progress with embedding sustainable development in local authority responsibilities. The Scheme applies to all Assembly functions, so it is relevant to our funding of, and the guidance we issue to, local government.

Local government has its own power and duties in respect of sustainable development including a duty to prepare a community strategy to 'improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of each area and its inhabitants and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development'. The Local Government Act 2000 also provides local authorities with powers to 'do anything which they consider is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of their area'.

Through Policy Agreements made with the Welsh Assembly Government each local authority is setting targets to reduce carbon emissions from buildings that they own, and housing in their area. Targets came into force in April 2004 and will need to be met by April 2007.

Under the first Scheme, the Assembly Government entered into a formal compact with the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) to promote sustainable development principles.

To complement this, we will:

- *update the guidance on the use of the wellbeing power by local authorities in Wales, consulting on the revised guidance by the **end of 2004**;*
- *develop jointly with WLGA, a Local Authority Standard that will provide practical guidance for individual service areas about what they can do to deliver sustainable development;*
- *ensure the Performance Measurement Review embeds sustainable development in the new performance framework to be introduced in **April 2005** and that work of Audit in Wales supports this aim;*
- ***by May 2005**, complete a detailed evaluation of the effectiveness of the first round of community strategies and the extent to which they and their Action Plans have mainstreamed sustainable development;*
- *ensure that the Assembly's proposals for rationalising the plans and strategies that local authorities are required to produce, enables the delivery of sustainable outcomes;*
- *support the five local authority and community recycling sector 'Exemplar' partnerships that are aiming to engage local communities to collectively reach a 50% recycling level **by 2007**, and retain the value of the secondary resources derived from waste through the creation of new local social enterprises.*

DELIVERING WITH PARTNERS

Working openly and positively with all those with a stake in creating a more sustainable future for Wales.

Sustainable development is not something that can or should be dictated, nor is it something where anyone has a monopoly of wisdom. Good governance dictates that action to achieve sustainable outcomes must involve all parts of society, empowering others - particularly civil society - to make a difference. The Assembly's Sustainable Development Scheme therefore commits us to work in partnership to deliver a sustainable Wales and to build on existing good work.

The Welsh Assembly Government has worked closely with leading non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Wales in promoting and developing its sustainable development duty. The Welsh offices of international NGOs have been especially valuable in linking us in to wider networks and knowledge. We have also learned much from the practical experience of local and community groups and social businesses that have contributed to our workshops and suggested best practice.

Partnership working is already at the centre of the Welsh Assembly Government's approach. To strengthen and clarify this, we will now:

- **with immediate effect** *work closely with business and social partners to take forward the proposals on 'Sustainable Production and Consumption';*
- **by October 2005** *and in conjunction with our proposals for the policy integration tool, engage partners more directly in the process of policy testing and development;*
- *promote best practice and learning across partners, linked to proposals for a virtual centre for sustainable development being taken forward by Cynnal Cymru.*

WALES: A GLOBAL CITIZEN

Helping to address international barriers, working with other regions and spheres of governance to both learn and teach.

We live in a global economy and society in which even Nation-States can seem powerless. Solutions to problems in Wales cannot be found only by addressing them on a Wales basis and decisions we take in Wales can have global repercussions.

The Assembly's unique duty towards sustainable development is an opportunity to promote our work and the underlying principles with others. It is important to realise that others are facing the same challenges as us and are struggling to find solutions to the same problems. It also gives us a responsibility to work beyond our shores to promote equity and opportunity for all.

Under the first scheme, the Assembly Government established an EU-funded network of regions and co-founded, at the World Summit in Johannesburg, and currently co-chairs a new network of regions from all parts of the world (NRG4SD).

In order to deliver on our duty by furthering the sustainability of others and ourselves we will:

- *promote best practice and principles to the EU's Strategy and Structural Funds review, through the outputs of the Sustainable European Regions Network in **autumn 2004**, and, through NRG4SD, to the meetings of the United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development;*
- *press for the adoption of strong policy positions and joint action by regional governments through NRG4SD's next conference in Lake Toba, Indonesia, **February 2005**;*
- *ensure that our international work, aims and commitments relating to sustainable development are collated and publicised by **February 2005** and carried through into Assembly policies;*
- *work with partners to develop proposals **over the next 2 years** to implement the Assembly's commitment to becoming a Fair Trade country;*
- *support the development of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy and a positive UK position on International negotiations; and consider opportunities for collaborative working with other regions around the world;*
- *work with NGOs in the development sector to identify a positive Welsh contribution to the Millennium Development Goals, potentially focusing on education, gender and language;*
- *uphold the UK Government's guidelines aimed at protecting developing countries from loss of health sector staff whilst maintaining opportunities for mutually beneficial exchange.*

PROMOTING AWARENESS AND LEADERSHIP

Supporting leaders and citizens to deliver.

Recent work by the Wales Consumer Council and the World Wildlife Fund indicated that almost one-third of people in Wales have heard of sustainable development and have some sense of the concept. Still more people support activities that underpin sustainable life-styles such as recycling, reducing car use and avoiding pollution. Young people are more aware of these issues but their views are rarely heard in the debate. Studies also indicate that there is a relative lack of championing of sustainable development amongst those currently in leadership positions.

In the first Action Plan, the focus was on putting our own policy house in order rather than giving messages to others. But if we are truly to become a sustainable nation, then sustainable development needs to engage all parts of civil society. This is not an easy task, as sustainable development is not a single issue but a way of thinking about the world. It is also important that we work with others and build on existing good practice, locally and nationally, rather than 're-inventing the wheel'. Work is already in hand at the national level (led by WWF Cymru) to promote awareness of the Ecological Footprint that we have adopted as an indicator and (from the Countryside Council for Wales) to promote local action and awareness.

To take this forward, we will:

- **by spring 2005, fund the central development of Cynnal Cymru's Executive Leadership Programme across the public, private and voluntary sectors in Wales, linked to our Public Sector Management Initiative;**
- **undertake research to inform the most effective method(s) of raising awareness on sustainable development and work with partners to develop a communications strategy and campaign by the end of 2005;**
- **work with the Welsh Youth Forum on Sustainable Development (WYFSD) to develop a programme of action to ensure the views of young people are heard in the development of a sustainable future for Wales.**

EDUCATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Giving sustainable development its place in education.

The consultation on the Sustainable Development Scheme identified the significance of education for enabling learners to engage with the principles of sustainable development now and for the future.

The Education for Sustainable Development Panel, an advisory group of the Assembly Government, has been working over the past 2 or more years to identify the place of sustainable development in education and the mechanisms by which suitable action can be taken forward. As a result a number of pilots have been run to test how best to embed sustainable development into education. The Global Citizenship Panel's work reflects the *Better Wales* commitment to ensure that all schools place a greater emphasis on active citizenship and giving young people fresh opportunities to engage with the wider world. The two Panels have recently merged to form the Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESD&GC) Advisory Panel, reflecting their natural complementarity with the aim of identifying the long-term vision for ESD&GC in Wales and facilitating local support at all levels of education. The Panel already administers a grant scheme that, for 2004-05, is worth £150,000 to assist with the piloting of innovative actions within the education sector. It is proposed that this should now be evaluated to ensure that it is meeting its objectives.

The challenge now is to ensure that sustainable development and global citizenship take their proper place in education and life-long learning. To make the step change we are looking for, we propose to:

- *include specific reference to the Assembly's commitment to promote sustainable*

*development and global citizenship in the policy context for the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales' (ACCAC) current review of curriculum and assessment arrangements. The Assembly Government will respond to ACCAC advice in **late autumn 2004**;*

- *ensure that ELWa directs Further Education Institutions to include a section on sustainable development in their 2005 strategic plans (**December 2004**). Plans will be submitted in **June 2005**;*
- *examine ways to provide a measure of training for teachers on sustainable development and global citizenship through developments in Early Professional Development and Continuing Professional Development (**report January 2005** for CPD programme in 2005-06);*
- *indicate, in our consultation on a draft revised initial teacher training circular, that we propose to give sustainable development and global citizenship increased prominence in the Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) standards. A response to the initial consultation covering this proposal will be published by **April 2005**;*
- *make sustainable development and global citizenship a feature of all aspects of school life This would encompass:*
 - *a consultation about requiring governing bodies to carry out their functions having regard to sustainability issues, with a view to making regulations in **early 2005**;*
 - *including sustainability requirements in grants for school buildings from **2005-06**;*
 - *promoting energy efficiency in schools;*
 - *extending the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes to 75% of schools by 2007;*

- promoting links between schools in developed and developing countries;
- work with HEFCW and ELWA to encourage FE and HE institutions to mainstream sustainable development and global citizenship as part of their strategic planning. Commission work from HEFCW in the 2005-06 remit letter (**January 2005**); request HEIs to include a section on sustainable development in their 2005 strategic plans (**May 2005**); strategic plans to be submitted by HE institutions (**July 2005**);
- introduce a commitment for ELWa to ensure that providers make sustainable development a part of their work (to be included in the 2005-06 remit letter);



Making our Money Talk

‘The use of money is all the advantage there is in having money’

Benjamin Franklin

PROCUREMENT

Using all our buying power to promote sustainable development.

The public sector in Wales spends almost £4billion every year buying goods and services. Most of that money comes via the Welsh Assembly Government. Embedding sustainable development principles into all procurement in Wales will help to deliver the vision of a sustainable Wales that will have substantial benefits for our communities, the economy, the environment, health and culture. Sustainable development based procurement will support our commitments on climate change through stimulating demand for new types of goods and services, help create stable and efficient markets for recycled materials and help meet energy efficiency targets. There will be opportunities for Welsh companies who respond to this agenda to benefit from this change.

To support existing work on sustainable procurement we will:

- *through the Welsh Procurement Initiative, establish a Ministerial Task Force to provide a strategic and co-ordinated route to match the development needs of a sustainable Welsh economy and SMEs, with the commercial needs of the public sector. Date of first meeting and terms of reference to be agreed by **autumn 2004**;*
- *through our internal Procurement Unit, review Assembly standard contract specifications to ensure they are based on best practice;*
- *through the Welsh Procurement Initiative support and enable the Welsh public sector to apply best practice to its procurement through its Sustainable Procurement pathfinder project, to be launched in **December 2004**;*
- *support the Welsh Procurement Initiative to continue its series of 'Procurement Fitness' checks, already started with ASPBs. The model includes a section assessing sustainability. Results of checks will be fed back to organisations to allow them to focus on development areas. By **March 2005** 4 high level reviews and 3 medium level reviews will have been completed;*
- *by **March 2005**, use data from the Business Eye database to ensure that appropriate support is available to help businesses with queries about sustainability issues.*

GRANTS

Ensuring all our funding works for sustainable development.

In addition to procurement, the Assembly Government makes grants to a very wide variety of private and public sector organisations. These grants, often targeted at individuals or small organisations working at the community level, have had a significant impact on social, economic, environmental and cultural issues, delivering positive change in Wales. Grants have also increased capacity within the voluntary sector, enabling the sector to play a key role in the delivery of services and projects.

The Assembly Government believes that it is possible to make grants work even harder to deliver change in two ways: getting added value from targeted action; and focusing on outcomes more than outputs.

Building on the review of grants undertaken by the 2004 Spending Review and the opportunities for common systems provided by our new ICT/ design recommendations, **by 2007** we will:

- *ensure grant giving is better able to support applications for funding that tackle the root causes of, and/or joined up solutions to, unsustainable trends;*
- *ensure terms and conditions of grants maximise sustainable outcomes and enable the Assembly Government to deliver against its vision of a sustainable future for Wales.*

FOOD

Changing food procurement to deliver sustainable development and health gains.

Diet plays a critical part in determining health, but also in determining life chances. There has been much focus of late on the links between diet and health and the problems of diet-related ill health particularly in children, specifically about obesity.

Food accounts for around 30% of lorries on the UK's roads and transporting it within the UK creates 3.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide every year.

The public sector, as large-scale purchasers of food in Wales, particularly for schools and hospitals, has a significant role to play in shifting consumption and production onto a more sustainable footing through the creation of markets and the shaping of supply chains.

There is already a great deal of action in hand including the provision of fruit in tuckshops, local food co-operatives and the large-scale pilot work in Powys. The introduction of school breakfasts recognises the links between what children eat and their educational performance. Through the Welsh Procurement Initiative (WPI) pathfinder project we have produced public sector procurement guidance on how to encourage local and more nutritious supply chains.

To take this central issue forward, we will:

- **immediately, through the Welsh Pathfinder Project, issue guidance to support processes to review the scope for changing food procurement within the major sectors of education and health and establish the wider business case for so doing;**
- **in the light of the review, roll out best practice across Wales and set targets to drive the process forward. Case studies will feature in a WPI conference in **December 04** and be published in **March 2005.****

ESTATES MANAGEMENT

Becoming an exemplar.

One of the indicators of an organisation's commitment to sustainable development is the way in which it manages its estate. The Welsh Assembly Government's core Estate comprises 46 holdings, while the NHS Estate in Wales occupies approximately 1150 hectares of land and owns almost 700 buildings of various sizes (not including GP premises).

The Assembly Government is already applying good practice in its estates. This includes ensuring that land owned by the Assembly does not pose an actual or potential threat to man and the natural and built environment; that the conservation of species and habitats is respected; using the Building Research Establishment's Environmental Appraisal Method (BREEAM) assessments when planning new or substantially refurbished premises, and introducing high standards of energy and environmental management. The Assembly has been awarded Green Dragon level 2 status for its estate.

To move us to becoming exemplars, we will:

- *in **autumn 2004** implement in house our Wales Public Sector Sustainable Waste Management Guidance Manual that provides good practice advice on minimising and recycling wastes generated at facilities managed by the public sector;*
- ***by the end of 2004** roll out the results of the joint Welsh Health Estates and Carbon Trust Wales pilot project on energy saving in NHS Wales to NHS Trusts in Wales;*
- *produce by **mid 2006**, guidance on best practice procurement methods and environmental performance standards for Assembly funded construction;*
- *achieve Green Dragon level 5;*
- *test future office location and design decisions against public transport accessibility criteria.*



Measuring our Progress

'Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted'

Albert Einstein

MONITORING AND REPORTING

Capturing real change.

To measure progress in sustainable development, more than one form of measurement is needed. It is necessary to monitor outcomes so as to establish whether we are living and working sustainably or at least moving towards sustainability. However, it can take a long time for trends to turn, and even longer for changes to show in published statistics. It is therefore necessary to have more immediate feedback on outputs, to check that the commitments are being put into practice.

To date, we have measured our progress towards sustainable development through:

- publishing a report each year on steps taken to implement the Scheme and its Action Plan;
- publishing updated information each year on our present 12 indicators; and
- commissioning and publishing an independent report on the effectiveness of the Scheme.

From now on we will take this work forward significantly by:

- extending our sustainable development indicators, as detailed in the following section;
- ensuring that the deliverables in the Action Plan are incorporated in the Welsh Assembly Government's operational plan alongside the existing commitments in *Wales: A Better Country*, and are monitored through the same mechanisms;
- coupling our annual statutory report on progress in implementing the Scheme with the First Minister's report.

INDICATORS

Getting the full picture.

The Assembly is currently monitoring outcomes through its 12 headline indicators, chosen to cover several key aspects of sustainable development. Amongst them is the Ecological Footprint – we were the first government in the world to adopt it as an official indicator.

However, these 12 indicators were never intended to be the complete set. A wider set of indicators is needed to reflect the key sustainability pressures and crunch issues facing Wales. In addition, indicators relating to specific aspects of sustainability do not necessarily sum to a picture of whether there is overall progress towards sustainable development. The Indicators Working Group that we established has reached some conclusions on these issues.

However to speed up our work in this area we now intend to continue work to respond and build on the preliminary recommendations of the Indicators Working Group on our indicators of sustainable development, exploring:

- *high-level summary indicators to use as headline measures of progress towards sustainable development, on the basis of the Indicators Working Group's recommendations, covering at least the following issues:*
 - *the global impact of consumption in Wales;*
 - *biodiversity within Wales;*
 - *the overall level of deprivation in Wales;*
 - *the level of economic activity;*
 - *genuine economic progress, rather than the simple turnover as reflected in GDP;*
- *additional indicators on the basis of the Indicators Working Group's recommendations;*

So that **by early summer 2005** we will be able to use these to:

- raise awareness about what we are trying to achieve;
- gauge progress towards sustainable development, as part of our performance management framework, and inform the development of our approach to appraisal;
- inform the overall performance framework of the Assembly Government.



Starting to Live Differently

The Sustainable Development Scheme
of the National Assembly for Wales

Made on 16 March 2004
Under Section 121 of the
Government of Wales Act



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STARTING TO LIVE DIFFERENTLY

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SCHEME OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES

SECTION 1: THE DUTY

1.1 The National Assembly for Wales has a duty under section 121 of the Government of Wales Act 1998 to promote sustainable development in the exercise of its functions, that is, in everything it does. The Act requires the Assembly to make a Scheme setting out how we propose to implement the duty, to consult before making it, keep it under review, publish an Annual report on progress and evaluate its effectiveness every four years. It is primarily the responsibility of the Welsh Assembly Government to implement the Scheme and to draw up an Action Plan to say how it will do so.

1.2 As such, the Scheme is the National Assembly's overarching strategic framework and sets out the vision of a sustainable future for all of Wales where action for social, economic and environmental improvement work together to create positive change. The Scheme works in conjunction with other key documents of the Welsh Assembly Government to deliver change:

- The SD Action Plan identifies the major long term strategic challenges for Wales in delivering that vision and, following consultation with stakeholders, identifies the key actions that need to be taken in the short, medium and longer term;
- *Wales: A Better Country* sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's political priorities against the vision of a sustainable Wales, for the next four years;
- The Wales Spatial Plan recognises that the vision will need to translate differently in

different areas of Wales. The Plan provides both the opportunity for dialogue between the national and local levels about what is needed in those areas and the tool for delivering those agreed needs into action.

All other strategies sit beneath this framework, their role being to underpin the delivery of a sustainable Wales.

1.3 To fulfil its legal obligations, the principles of sustainable development must be mainstreamed into the way the National Assembly operates requiring compliance across objectives and processes. The implementation of sustainable development practices requires a major change in culture and working practices for many organisations, although progress is being made. The consultation with key partner and stakeholder organisations on the new SD Action Plan identified amongst other things, the specific areas where action is needed, with actions for the Assembly and other organisations to undertake.

1.4 Wales is currently operating unsustainably in a number of ways. In common with other developed countries, and despite improvements, we are still meeting our needs in ways that are less resource-efficient than they should be and failing to enhance environmental, social and economic capital at the same time. We are seeing the consequences in climate change, and in damage to environments within Wales and in other parts of the world. Increased globalisation of the world economy also presents challenges to our economy, society and identity and in common with the rest of Western Europe we are facing demographic trends that will mean an ageing population and we also face issues in equality of health and income. To meet these challenges, we need to reinvent the way we live if we are to pass on a better world to future generations.

1.5 Achievement of a sustainable Wales is ultimately only possible in the context of a sustainable planet. Advancement of the Scheme is dependent upon working with governments and organisations beyond Wales both to share with and learn from them and to influence others about the need to pursue a sustainable future. The Scheme recognises the global dimension to sustainable development and the role for Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government's work with European and international governments and our commitment to the declarations of the NRG4SD (Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development) reflects the importance of the global dimension to our work.

1.6 The Assembly takes the view that our current way of living is unsustainable and that real progress can no longer be gauged by standard measures of economic growth alone. Proposals for a full set of indicators, designed to measure both our general and specific progress towards creating a sustainable Wales are published alongside the Scheme, and will be kept under review.

1.7 This Scheme sets out how we intend to fulfil our duty. We anticipate that it will not be amended until after the next election.

SECTION 2: THE DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

2.1 The National Assembly for Wales will promote development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. By this we mean the needs of all human life, within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own social, economic, environmental and cultural needs. Our interpretation of what this means for Wales is set out in the vision in Section 3.

2.2 This means that the principles and vision of the Sustainable Development Scheme will drive everything we do. We will integrate these into our work and actively require or influence others, for example local authorities, public bodies, business, the voluntary sector and communities, to do the same to deliver change. We will seek to enable them to do so.

2.3 The Assembly's vision of sustainable development remains a broad one, embracing commitments to improving quality of life, promoting equality and tackling disadvantage and poverty. This is because sustainable development in one place is often different to sustainable development in another place although the principles remain the same wherever. The Wales Spatial Plan will seek to capture this.



SECTION 3: THE VISION OF A SUSTAINABLE WALES

3.1 The Assembly will pursue, on an effective partnership basis, a sustainable future for Wales based on:

- promoting a diverse, competitive, high added-value economy, with high skills and education, that responds to sustainable development opportunities, minimises demands on the environment and maximises the distribution of the benefits;
- action on social justice that tackles poverty, poor health, and consequences of disadvantage and provides people and their communities with the means to help themselves break out of the poverty trap;
- action in our built and natural environment that enhances pride in the community, promotes biodiversity, promotes local employment and minimises waste generation, energy, water and transport demands;
- strengthening Wales' cultural identity and helping to create a bilingual country, while looking confidently outwards and welcoming new cultural influences;
- creating a place which values its children and where young people want to live, work and enjoy a high quality of life, and where future generations enjoy better prospects in life and are not landed with a legacy of problems bequeathed by us;
- supporting people to live healthy and independent lives, irrespective of income, location or disability;
- valuing everyone in society and promoting equality of opportunity;
- promoting openness, partnership and participation, so that people can play a part in taking decisions that affect them;
- contributing to sustainable development at a global level as well as locally and taking account of the global impacts of decisions made in Wales.

3.2 The Assembly also supports the objectives that were set out in the 1999 UK Sustainable Development Strategy *A Better Quality of Life* and will work with the UK Government to ensure that the next UK Strategy enables the delivery of a sustainable future for Wales.



SECTION 4: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

4.1 Translating the Assembly's vision into action will mean changing the way we work so that:

- sustainable development underpins and drives everything the Assembly does and advocates others to do;
- critical issues are identified, through dialogue with leading stakeholders, and focused on;
- people and communities are at the heart of sustainable development;
- decisions in each field of policy take account of effects of proposals 'in the round', not just in the field in question and recognise potential tensions and risks of action and inaction;
- policies and programmes are designed in an integrated way so that they are mutually reinforcing and evidence based;
- funding and grant schemes reinforce this integrated approach;
- opportunities are recognised early and acted upon;
- spending plans are directed towards achieving key sustainable development outcomes with suitable planning horizons;
- new ways of working with our partners to achieve our objectives are developed;
- decisions about the short term should not be contradictory to long-term aims;
- policies recognise the needs and opportunities of all parts of Wales and the connections between actions at different spatial scales;
- we take into account the global impacts of decisions made at the Wales level;
- wherever possible the root causes of problems are tackled;
- good practice examples of sustainable development projects are replicated and mainstreamed at all levels, from local to national;
- sustainable development is integrated into education and training programmes;
- public understanding and awareness of the meaning of sustainable development and its day-to-day implications for everyone is enhanced.

4.2 The Assembly is committed to:

- putting people, and their quality of life now and in the future, at the centre of its concern;
- ensuring everyone has the chance to get information, see how decisions are made and take part in decision-making;
- long-term planning which takes account of the need to recognise future challenges and opportunities e.g. climate change, to safeguard the interests of this and future generations;
- using scientific knowledge to aid decision-making, and trying to work out in advance what knowledge will be needed so that it can be researched;

- taking account of the full range of costs and benefits when making plans and decisions, including those which cannot easily be valued in money terms, and taking account of timing, risks and uncertainties;
- respecting environmental limits, so that resources are not irrecoverably depleted or the environment irreversibly damaged: this implies, for instance, contributing to the protection of the planet's climate; protecting and enhancing biodiversity; minimising harmful emissions; and promoting sustainable use of natural resources;
- applying the precautionary principle, that cost-effective measures to prevent possibly serious environmental damage should not be postponed just because of scientific uncertainty about how serious the risk is;
- preventing pollution as far as possible, and making the polluter pay for the damage done by pollution, and more generally trying to ensure that costs are met by those whose actions incur them.

SECTION 5: FULFILLING THE DUTY

SECTION 5A: Through Decision Making

5.1 The Welsh Assembly Government recognises the need to establish key tests that will enable others to measure its progress in mainstreaming SD and achieving good governance. It will seek to become recognised as an 'excellent' organisation in this respect and measures will include:

- continuing to review all policies, programmes and grant schemes by 2005, including procurement policies, to align them collectively with sustainable development objectives;
- keeping appraisal mechanisms, tools and definitions of value for money under review, to ensure they remain aligned with the objectives and principles of sustainable development;
- ensuring that all new policies, projects, programmes, grant schemes, appraisal mechanisms and definitions of value for money underpin the delivery of our vision of a sustainable Wales.

SECTION 5B: Through Strategic Policies which Contribute to Sustainable Development

5.2 The Welsh Assembly Government will ensure its existing strategies work together and in such a way as to deliver our vision of a sustainable future for Wales and a more sustainable pattern of development. It will design all its future strategies to deliver the vision and will consult to test whether it is achieving this. Individual strategies should not only be underpinned by sustainable development principles but linked together to

ensure an integrated approach and sustainable outcomes.

SECTION 5C: Through Specific Policy Actions

5.3 The Action Plan that is published alongside the Scheme sets out the actions the Welsh Assembly Government will take to deliver change in relation to the key sustainability challenges. Those challenges include climate change, public sector procurement, governance for SD and education and awareness. All the sectors below have a key role to play.

SECTION 5D: By Working with Others

5.4 The Assembly is committed to active engagement at all levels believing that the changes we seek can only take place with the help and engagement of others. The Assembly will work openly and in partnership with others to deliver change and will actively encourage others to do the same. This section gives examples of how this will happen:

Within Europe and beyond

- By promoting understanding, collaboration and partnerships in sustainable development and by seeking greater international recognition of the importance of the contribution that regions make to sustainable development;
- by feeding in to the UN's Commission for Sustainable Development through NRG4SD (the international Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development);
- by ensuring that international commitments and targets relating to sustainable development are carried through into Assembly policies

- by maintaining and developing links with countries and regions within Europe and beyond to share and develop best practice, expertise and experience;
- by maintaining and strengthening links with the European Commission to contribute to its Sustainable Development Strategy through the Sustainable European Regions Network;
- by being outward looking in our approach and responsive to new ideas and thinking from across the globe

With the UK Government at national and regional levels, and with other devolved administrations

- by sharing and developing best practice;
- by developing and pursuing shared objectives, including engaging in development of a UK Strategy to succeed *A Better Quality of Life*;
- by helping deliver UK commitments;
- by protecting and promoting Welsh interests;
- by setting an example for others to follow.

With local government:

The Assembly resources and guides local government in Wales and these dealings fall under the scope of the Scheme. We will encourage and support local government to promote sustainable development through all our links including:

- by working with local government to promote sustainable development, including but not only in relation to community strategies, policy agreements, *Wales Programme for Improvement* and other

strategies such as health social care and wellbeing strategies;

- by learning from local government experience of the development of Local Agenda 21 strategies and sustainability appraisal tools;
- by working together on issues such as the ongoing development of indicators of sustainable development;
- by seeking to carry forward, and to develop further, our compact with the Welsh Local Government Association on co-operating to promote sustainable development.

With other public bodies

All our dealings with other public bodies fall under the scope of the Scheme and it is thus that the Scheme applies to Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies for instance. We will ensure all public bodies promote sustainable development through all such dealings:

- by explaining the Assembly's requirements in the remit letters to sponsored bodies at the start of every financial year;
- by scrutinising corporate plans and strategies to make sure that this agenda is incorporated into their activities, and by monitoring their sustainable development performance;
- by guiding or requiring public bodies to:
 - help deliver the vision of a sustainable Wales actively through their corporate planning and policy development particularly in key areas such as grant schemes, consultation, guidance and advice to the Assembly and others;
 - change the way they work in order to achieve this; and

- work with each other, the Assembly's partners and key stakeholders whenever possible.

With the voluntary sector:

- by promoting and developing the potential for active citizenship by all members of the community;
- by sharing and promoting best practice on sustainable development;
- by working in partnership to develop innovative policies, programmes, grant schemes etc through a 'bottom up, top down' approach;
- by recognising their key role in the delivery of services;
- by seeking to give a clear indication of Assembly priorities, to assist voluntary bodies in planning their activities.

With business:

- by influencing their activities through the goods and services bought by the public sector in Wales;
- by consulting on new policies, including working closely with business representative bodies;
- by promoting ways business can contribute to sustainability objectives, for example resource efficiency (eco-efficiency);
- by being clearer and more open on matters that affect businesses;

- by providing support to help Welsh businesses adapt to new challenges e.g. through Assembly's Business Environment campaign and the Welsh Development Agency;

- by providing specific support;
- by ensuring sustainable development objectives are central to business support and advice programmes.

With experts and stakeholders

- by working with a wide range of experts and stakeholders both within Welsh civic society, including through Cynnal Cymru (Sustainable Development Forum), and those outside Wales.

With communities and individuals

- by action to inform people about sustainable development to enable them to make informed choices;
- by ensuring sustainable development is taught in schools through the national curriculum and in colleges and promote its relevance to global citizenship;
- by encouraging the participation of young people, for example through the young people's forum;
- by promoting local projects, recognising achievements and encouraging others to take action;
- by being open in our decision making;
- by seeking to ensure that all Welsh Assembly Government policies integrate at local level and that local people are engaged in their implementation.

SECTION 5E: Leading by Example

5.5 In order to deliver the vision of a sustainable Wales, the principles of sustainable development will apply to the Assembly's internal operations. This will include:

- developing , maintaining and strengthening arrangements to ensure that Sustainable Development is mainstreamed and promoted within the Assembly's structures;
- continuing development and use of sustainability tools for staff to ensure that sustainable development is mainstreamed into our work as required by this Scheme;
- developing a training programme to ensure that those who develop and implement policy decisions understand what is required of them and are able to use the tools that are developed;
- implementing our Green Action Plan, and Green Transport Plan, and keeping them under review;
- ensuring high standards of sustainable construction and management of Assembly buildings;
- pursuing higher levels of Green Dragon accreditation;
- continuing to develop our sustainable procurement policy and practice;
- continuing to strive to be an exemplary employer;
- communicating the sustainability gains which are made in the Assembly's operations and activities.

SECTION 5F: By setting and using Indicators and Targets

5.6 The Welsh Assembly Government will:

- report progress on the accompanying Action Plan;
- keep the Action Plan under review and publish any alterations to it;
- seek to identify a small suite of high-level summary indicators to use as headline measures of progress towards sustainable development, covering at least the following issues:
 - the global impact of consumption in Wales;
 - biodiversity within Wales
 - the overall level of deprivation in Wales
 - the level of economic activity
 - genuine economic progress, taking account of environmental factors, resources and well-being;
- use a full Indicator set, reflecting cultural ,social, economic and environmental issues, to gauge progress towards sustainable development, and as part of its performance management framework;
- use the indicators to inform the development of its sustainability appraisal tools;
- keep this set under review.

SECTION 5G: By Monitoring, Review, Evaluation, Reporting and Feedback

5.7 The Welsh Assembly Government will:

- seek continually to improve our mechanisms and information base for monitoring the implementation of the Scheme and Action Plan;
- report annually referring both to the full range of sustainable development indicators and to actions taken to implement this Scheme;
- use the reporting system as a driver for change;
- seek to draw on the views of partners in Wales, including Cynnal Cymru, and on the experience of partners abroad, in compiling its reports, particularly the next statutory effectiveness report to be compiled after the next election;
- continue to measure our progress, and the effectiveness of our work, against the highest standards;
- ensure that our monitoring, review and evaluation processes are transparent and simple;
- use a range of media and techniques, including the internet and new technology, to gain feedback and publicise findings;
- be open and honest about our progress and learn from experience;
- ensure that best practice is shared and knowledge is used to inform action.

Further copies

Further copies of this document are available from:

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