Agenda

• Background to the United Kingdom (UK)
• UK Sustainable Development Strategy
• Sustainable Procurement Task Force
• Barriers to success
• Conclusions, Actions & Recommendations
UK:

- England
- Scotland
- Wales
- Northern Ireland

Government:

- National
- Agency
- Region
- Local
How sustainable is the UK?

• 60 Million People
• Land mass 241,000 sq km
• World's 4th largest economy, £3.1 trillion
• 73% Services, 26% Manufacturing, 1% Farming
• 70% Home ownership
• Population below poverty line 17%
• Unemployment 4%
• Consumer led economy

• Pressure on land through housing
• Each household generates 1 tonne waste per year (10% recycling)
• Should meet Kyoto target of 12.5% reduction in greenhouse gases by 2010
• 50% of Government Departments are practising environmental procurement
In 1998 my government first set out our strategy to help deliver a better quality of life through sustainable development. In 2005 we have the opportunity to take account of changes within the UK – devolution to Scotland and Wales, and to regional bodies, and local government – and internationally with the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002.

Making the economy growth, new and sustainable generations will live with a changed climate, depleted resources and without the power and freedom to make decisions both to our standard of living and our quality of life. Each of us needs to make the right choices to ensure a future that is in harmony with our sustainable future. This means sustainable development.

In the years ahead, there is no reason why our government cannot ensure that our generation and the one to come will be able to make sustainable behavior and society the norm over the years. We will only succeed if we go with the grain of what individuals and businesses want, and, channel that tendency to confront the environmental challenges we face. Development, growth, and prosperity are not at odds and should not be at odds with sustainability.

Over the past six years, scientific opinion has moved decisively to an almost universal consensus that climate change is happening and is the result of human activity. That means we must view the debate from whether there is a problem, to how to deal with it. Yes, climate change represents a potentially catastrophic threat, but it is within our control to address and adapt to it. Climate change will not only affect the UK, but all parts of the world, and it needs to be dealt with on a global basis to enable the world to adapt to it, particularly developing areas. However, we must also respond to this challenge on what was once viewed as a domestic issue, and what is now a global challenge, but it is not an issue that is restricted to just the developed world. The UK will play a key role in global efforts to reach a legally binding agreement through the UN and other forums to strengthen the global effort to tackle climate change.

Although climate change is the most serious global environmental threat, promoting new, sustainable ways of living, working, producing and consuming which would lead to improved benefits for human health and well-being, we need to continue our duty of care towards our natural resources, for our own benefit and for the benefit of future generations.

We are now aware of the need to make sure for the environment an integral part of our thinking and planning, rather than seeking the consequences of neglecting the whole. We need to regard the local environment as a major public service (like the NHS or education) which benefits us every day. Looked at this way, it is...
UK Sustainable Development Strategy

- New five year Strategy published in March 2005
- Aims to improve performance
- It is UK wide and was ratified by regional assemblies
- Four Priorities:
  - Sustainable Consumption and Production
  - Climate Change and Energy
  - Natural Resource Protection and Environmental Enhancement
  - Sustainable Communities
Securing the future

- Government will lead by example. The UK Government buys £13 billion worth of goods and services each year. For the wider public sector this figure is £125 billion. We want to ensure that we spend your money sustainably, starting with a commitment to buy cleaner cars and by our new offsetting scheme to reduce the carbon impacts of unavoidable air travel. In this document we show how every government department will contribute to this strategy. I want every government department to produce its own action plan by the end of the year so we can ensure delivery.

- To show we are serious about delivery, we will stop reporting our own progress and hand that task over to a strengthened Sustainable Development Commission, which will act as the independent “watchdog” of government progress.

This is a truly challenging agenda. It will involve working across departmental boundaries and through all levels of government – from the neighbourhood to the United Nations. It involves channelling the power of business by stimulating the market to innovate and to produce more cost effective and sustainable options for all purchasers. It needs the commitment of voluntary groups, and it involves influencing the individual everyday choices we all make.

Most of all, it means focussing on long-term solutions, not short-term fixes. Targeting prevention now, rather than putting right later. Ensuring we get the full environmental, social and economic dividend from every pound we spend.

We have spent a long time getting to grips with the concept of sustainability. I want to declare a moratorium on further words. I want this new strategy to be a catalyst for action to secure our future.

Tony Blair
“To ensure we make rapid progress in the most effective way, the Government will appoint in Spring 2005 a business-led Sustainable Procurement Task Force to develop a national action plan for Sustainable Procurement across the public sector by April 2006”
The Sustainable Procurement Task Force

- UK aims to be amongst the leaders in the EU by 2009
- Chaired by Sir Neville Simms
- National Action Plan by April
- Try to answer difficult questions e.g. social issues
- 33 members
- Final report to the Prime Minister
5 Work streams

- International Benchmarking
- Data / priorities
- Engaging with Suppliers
- Accountability
- Capacity building
International Benchmarking – remit

• Baseline the UK’s performance
• Bring together good international practice
• Define sustainable procurement
• Determine what excellence will look like in 2009
• Assess the performance of the Task Force
International Benchmarking – progress

• Defined best practice for 2009
• Desk study interim results show:
  • More initiatives on GPP than SPP e.g. Japan, Sweden etc
  • Some leaders begin to emerge in both areas
  • Varying definitions of SPP
• We are interested to find out:
  • What was done to address sustainability in procurement?
  • Were there any measurable benefits?
  • What lessons were learned?
International Benchmarking – plans

• Baseline questionnaire
  • Will provide a focused approach, all selected countries are benchmarked against the same criteria
  • Aiming to complete this phase by end of October.

• Research project
  • Will provide an in-depth analysis of sustainable procurement initiatives
  • Final report on this strand of work by 18th November
Data / Priorities

• Finding the **REAL** evidence of sustainability impacts in government spend, is it the areas we first thought?
• Identify the data gaps and work out how to fix them
• Determine how priorities should be identified nationally, organisationally, locally etc
• Recommend the priorities for the National Action Plan (short, medium and long term)
Engaging with Suppliers

• Supplier focussed, acts as a sounding board, is questioning:
  • What is it really like doing business with the public sector?
  • Where do we contradict ourselves?
  • Are we really open to innovation?
  • How do we perform better?
  • What barriers/risks are there?

• Is testing the outputs of all working groups
Accountability

• What incentives are needed for Government to buy sustainably?
• Who reaps the benefits?
  • The procurer or are they realised further down the line?
  • What happens when the benefits accrued aren’t in the initial spending body e.g. school meals and NHS
• The extent to which public sector spend decisions are the responsibility of professional procurers
• How do we measure success?
Capacity Building/ Skills/ Training

• How do we influence behaviours?
  • Executive, senior managers, project managers, specifiers, procurement managers, buyers and suppliers
• Need to demonstrate the link between procurement, corporate strategy and sustainability impacts
• Produce clear guidance, support, tools and training
• Expose and eliminate the barriers
• Led by Chris Browne, Environment Agency
Flexible framework, where do different parts of Government want to be?

Steps over Time

Sustainability

Min

Max

2009
Flexible Framework

- Recognises that everyone can’t be best practice
- Sets a minimum level to reach by 2009
- Gives those who want to be the best, the steps they need to take (tough steps)
- Gives a basis for measurement
- Gives the practical actions needed for each level
- Focus is on “how” as well as “why”
Barriers to sustainable procurement

- Leadership
- Focus on cost
- Failure to integrate sustainability
- Lack of information, training and accountability
- Decentralisation
- Complexity of supply chains
- Short term v Long term
- Difficulty in calculating intangible benefits
Conclusion

• UK recognises it needs to do better
• Allocated the expertise to drive sustainable procurement
• Raised the profile of sustainability
• UK wants to be amongst the leaders by 2009
• Need to link together internationally to share good practice, consolidate resources and avoid duplication
• We hope to produce material that can be used by anyone in any country
Actions:

• If you would like to participate in the international benchmark let me know
• If you have examples of good practice, please share them with me

Recommendation:

• That the IGPN review the outputs from the UK Sustainable Procurement Task Force and if considered appropriate, put them on the IGPN web site for others to use
Thank you

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