

**CONSULTATION ON
THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN
OF THE WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT
2004-2007**

DRAFT – MARCH 2004

Foreword

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

Sustainable development is often seen as an environmental issue but it is just as much about wealth creation and tackling poverty and injustice. For me sustainable development means rethinking our economy towards sustainable production and consumption and relieving poverty and injustice for people now. It also means ensuring that we don't unjustly condemn our descendants or people elsewhere in the world to a lower quality of life by short-sighted decisions we make today – decisions that despoil the natural world on which we depend or that weaken the community life that supports us as individuals. Put this way, sustainable development is a necessity.

I have long been proud that the National Assembly for Wales has a legal duty on sustainable development written into its constitution. I am proud too of the commitments that the Welsh Assembly Government has made to discharge this duty. Together these have already taken us to a position where we are recognised internationally as being amongst the leaders in thinking about sustainable development.

However, commitment must lead to action. We have to face the fact that the way Wales operates at the moment is unsustainable. What's more, in many practical areas we still lag behind the best. For all our commitment, we are still starting from a low base. We need a step change.

Last year, our new strategic agenda *Wales: A Better Country* set a strong agenda rooted in our commitment to building a sustainable Wales. This draft plan is about additional actions that, together with what we are doing already, should move us from our present position – leading in terms of our commitments – to a point where we are tangibly developing in a sustainable way.

Sustainable development must be at the heart of the Welsh Assembly Government's approach to all its responsibilities, of its work with others, and of its stance internationally. Some of the resulting change will be painful but it is vital for all our futures.

When consultation is complete, and we have considered the points made to us, we shall issue an Action Plan that seeks to fulfil the commitments in the Assembly's new Sustainable Development Scheme and will have the status of a formal addition to our strategic agenda for government.

Rhodri Morgan 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 and 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, I 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.

This draft Action Plan says how the Welsh Assembly Government will implement the commitments in the new Scheme. It tries to address issues identified in the effectiveness report about the way the Assembly works and the relative lack of real world change to date, and it draws on responses to our consultation on revising the Scheme. We are consulting on the draft Action Plan since it contains many specific proposals that were not covered in our consultation last autumn but because this consultation draws directly on an existing participative process and I am eager to press ahead with action, I am asking for your views by **[Friday 21st May]**.

Once we have consulted, and have considered the responses, we intend to produce an Action Plan that will:

- 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;
- Complement the first Wales Spatial Plan (consultation on a draft of which has recently finished) which we expect to publish later this year.
- Ensure our progress is kept under review

The original Scheme, and steps we have already taken, provided the basis for a more sustainable Wales. Now, with the new Scheme and this Action Plan, we can deliver real change.

Carwyn Jones AM

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 unnumbered 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 fast. This generates wealth and may make it easier to meet people's needs in a more resource-efficient way 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.

Slowly, 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 as another;
- 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;
- reducing the rate of loss of biodiversity world-wide by 2010, as a precursor to halting it; and in particular, halting 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 and the Perth Declaration of the international Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (NRG4SD), 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 steal a march 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, EU- 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;

- While we led the way in wind energy in the UK in the 1990s, our recent record on increasing renewable energy generation is modest;
- 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 progress we have already made;
- 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 have started a major new agenda;
- 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.

The Wales Spatial Plan is setting these issues in a more spatial context and has identified accessibility as a further challenge.

The fact that the world community and the European Union 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 marketplace. 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.

HOW THIS PLAN CONTRIBUTES

Much is already being done to address the sustainable development challenges we face. Many of these actions are covered in our existing strategic agenda *Wales: A Better Country*.

There is an intimate connection between action on sustainable development and action on better health, equality and social justice, for they all contribute to each other. This action plan is not intended to replicate action or commitments already contained in *Wales: A Better Country*, but sustainable development as a whole depends on the actions we are taking as a

Government to promote 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. Sustainable development has people at its heart.

Sustainable development is also about governance and the ability to tailor our approach to different needs in different areas. So the Wales Spatial Plan, the corporate planning cycle for our agencies and our work with delivery in local government are central to making our sustainable vision for Wales a reality.

The Action Plan

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. In the light of the consultation sessions held over the winter, we have refined these from the topics identified in the October consultation paper, as several key themes around leadership, governance, awareness and purchasing emerged as central to all the debates. We have therefore identified the areas for new action as follows:

- Living Differently

Addressing the major structural issues for sustainable development – energy, settlements, natural resources, 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 progress

Testing our progress against new indicators and reporting on progress

Living Differently

'We are not tinkers who merely patch and mend what is broken... we must be watchmen, guardians of the life and the health of our generation, so that stronger and more able generations may come after'

Dr Elizabeth Blackwell

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 significant 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 comes directly from our use of energy, natural resources and land in modern society and economy. The goal now is to move towards a 'low-carbon' economy.

Although Wales has traditionally been heavily dependent on energy for its industries, it has tremendous natural potential for renewable and alternative energy, provided we can find ways of minimising negative impacts of the associated infrastructure. 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.

We now propose to take this work forward significantly by:

- driving forward our clean energy policies in Wales, by publishing and implementing a clean energy action plan, which will include establishing an increased role for Wales in developing next generation renewables technologies
- in conjunction with the construction industry, 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
- implementing the *Energy Saving Wales* plan across all sectors
- issuing planning guidance on assessing the most appropriate locations for renewable energy plants which will significantly contribute to our 2010 4TWhr/annum renewable energy target
- determining a business case/model for the development of community renewables and innovative energy projects
- With DTI, Carbon Trust and others, strengthening the knowledge/research base in Wales for emerging marine energy and hydrogen economy systems, including ensuring a full renewables strategic environmental assessment is undertaken for Welsh waters

LIVEABLE PLACES

Rethinking our villages, towns and cities so that our daily lives make fewer demands on our natural resources and support our communities

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 sustainable development needs;
- a Transport Framework rooted in sustainable development principles;
- the Communities First programme working with the most deprived communities to help them to identify and tackle local issues;
- 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.

To help to make our communities exemplars of sustainable development, we now propose:

- to review guidance on the location of larger-scale, travel-generating developments, on accessibility and on local road layouts;
- to promote the importance of planning briefs for larger area sites that promote sustainable development of the whole site, including mixed use, energy and access issues;
- to use the introduction of Strategic Environmental Assessment integrated with Sustainability Appraisal for development plans to ensure wider area issues and linkages are properly addressed;
- to improve data sources on land use in the context of sustainable development, building on the work undertaken for the Wales Spatial Plan;
- to test emerging strategic transport programmes against our sustainable development framework;

- to work with developers and the Design Commission to reinvent the way we develop buildings and sites to meet our sustainable development goals.
- Also links with cultural and language distinctiveness
- Community involvement with Local Development Plans
- Use the SD clause in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill (when enacted) to embed SD in planning policies

OUR NATURAL RESOURCES

Regarding our natural resources as our major asset

In a very basic sense, the land, 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 future competitiveness. Tourism is now the world's 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 to work. 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.

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. .

Wales has marine waters rich in biodiversity, improved river quality and much improved air quality, with only a few remaining 'hot spots' in industrialised areas

To take this agenda forward, we now propose to:

- implement the new Single Farm Payment, decoupling support from production and so removing artificial incentives for farmers to increase or intensify production. In addition we will ensure it is only paid where farmers protect soil, air and water, and conserve biodiversity;
- announce shortly our decision following consultation on whether to introduce an expanded and more coherent range of agri-environmental action. This would provide a basic level of agri-environmental action open to all farmers, and pilot new approaches to helping groups of farmers meet specific objectives in terms of bio-diversity, river catchment management or the landscape. It would be funded by increasing the role of modulation of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) subsidies.;
- publish a new environment strategy which is linked to the opportunities provided by the new CAP regime, and incorporates a strategy for protecting Welsh soils.;
- To implement our woodlands strategy, so that by 2023 50% of the National Assembly's Woodlands will have converted from clear-felling to continuous cover and clear fell is replanted with species appropriate to specific sites; natural regeneration; and local ecological objectives.

- To set a framework for considering our marine environment in the context of the Wales Spatial Plan.
- To set a clear framework for whole landscape management through the Wales Spatial Plan.

SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION

Supporting Welsh Business to take current and future opportunities

Sustainable production and consumption has been identified as a key international challenge. The part Wales can play with its powers and responsibilities is perhaps modest: we do not shape tax systems that can influence economic patterns or product specifications that can directly regulate impacts; but we can give a lead as a supplier of support and advice to companies, as a buyer of goods and services and as an advocate with the wider public. This section covers direct work with business.

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. 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 now propose:

- to develop a second phase of the Business and Environment Action Plan based on delivering the Assembly's visions for sustainable development, with the help of the new formed resources management expert panel;
- to promote sustainable development to companies through all the advisory and support programmes of the WDA and other economic agencies;
- to explore scope for social enterprise to take a stronger role in sustainable production, for example in renewable energy production.

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 sustainable development 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 now propose:

- measuring ourselves against the benchmark organisational standard being developed by Forum for the Future
- applying the policy integration tool to all strategic policies and publishing the results as part of consultations, keeping the tool under review
- embedding sustainable development in core training programmes and surveying staff understanding
- making sustainable development a central driver of our internal change programme and Management Plan, as well as of policy planning;
- ensuring a clear, transparent delivery chain, linking the Assembly's vision and action on the ground
- testing that our allocation of resources underpins our vision.

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.

A few ASPBs now have sustainable development strategies in place and are beginning to apply fresh thinking, appraisal and training across their organisations. We now need to see this going across all organisations and being backed up with detailed support and guidance.

The NHS in Wales is major employer, landholder and purchaser of good and services. It has major potential to be an exemplar for sustainable development.

We have already set out the importance attached to these principles in our new remit letters to ASPBs for 2004/5. We now propose:

- jointly reviewing of the current strategic planning cycle for executive ASPBs to ensure it is fit for purpose;
- jointly developing practical guidance and training tailored to the individual organisations including the use of integration tools and organisational excellence models;
- build on the work of the King's Fund to determine key steps for the NHS in Wales;
- reviewing the existing approach to setting aims and targets for ASPBs to ensure they promote sustainable development;
- developing policy integration tools with the ASPBs and using them to test their programmes and grants;
- using the Wales Spatial Plan to integrate activity at the more local level against sustainable development goals.

DELIVERING WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Helping local government to deliver its role as an enabler for local communities using sustainable development principles

The review undertaken of the effectiveness of the sustainable development scheme indicated a lack of progress with embedding sustainable development through the wider delivery chain. The Scheme applies to all Assembly functions and so to our funding and guidance to local government.

Local government has its own power and duties in respect of sustainable development. Local authorities have 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'.

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 now propose to :

- develop jointly with WLGA a Local Authority Sustainable Development Standard that will provide practical guidance for individual service areas about what they can do to deliver sustainable development;
- ensure the Performance Management Review embeds sustainable development in the new performance framework to be introduced in April 2005 and that the work of audit in Wales supports this aim;
- test sustainable development issues as part of the review of Community Strategies being conducted by the Community Strategy Working Group
- ensure that planned rationalisation of central planning requirements on local government enables the delivery of sustainable outcomes.

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. 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 groups and social businesses that have contributed to our workshops and suggested best practice.

Partnership working is already at the centre of the way in which the Welsh Assembly Government as a whole operates. To strengthen and clarify this, we now propose to:

- engage partners in the early development of policy through involvement in the process of testing new proposals
- promote best practice and learning across partners, linked to ideas for a virtual centre for sustainable development.

WALES: A GLOBAL CITIZEN

Helping to address international barriers to sustainable development and 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 yet 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 a new network of regions (NRG4SD) from all parts of the world that we currently co-Chair.

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

- implement the Assembly's commitment to becoming a Fair Trade country;
- press for the adoption of strong policy positions by regional governments through NRG4SD;
- ensure that international commitments and targets relating to sustainable development are carried through into Assembly policies wherever applicable;
- promote best practice and principles to the EU's Sustainable Development Strategy and Structural Funds review, through the Sustainable European Regions Network, and, through NRG4SD, to the UN's Commission for Sustainable Development,
- use what we learn from the networks to benchmark and improve work in Wales.

PROMOTING AWARENESS AND LEADERSHIP

Supporting leaders and citizens to deliver sustainable development

Recent work by the Wales Consumer Council and WWF 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 SD amongst those currently in leadership positions.

In the first action plan, the focus was on putting our own policy house in order (which we must continue) 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 the concept 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 therefore propose:

- to support Cynnal Cymru's Executive Leadership Programme across the public, private and voluntary sectors in Wales, linked to our Public Sector Management Initiative;
- to actively engage the Welsh Youth Forum on Sustainable Development (WYFSD) ensuring the views of young people are heard in the development of a sustainable future for Wales;
- on the basis of research, to initiate awareness raising on sustainable development using wide range of media and opportunities and working with others. The research will include branding of actions under this plan; literature to accompany communications from the Assembly Government and its agents; interactive websites; promotional opportunities, and the use of flagships and champions;
- to establish a focal point (real or virtual) for best practice on sustainable development;
- to assist or develop networking amongst champions for sustainable development;

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 of this work, a number of pilots have been run to test how best to embed sustainable development in for example, school policies and teacher training. The panel will shortly merge with the Global Citizenship Panel, reflecting their natural complementarity. Education for Sustainable development and Global Citizenship will from now on be considered as a single entity.

The challenge now is to mainstream the work of the pilots 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:

- Make sustainable development and global citizenship a feature of required *whole school policy* for all schools backing this up by issuing practical guidance, toolkits and incentives covering sustainable development and global citizenship across the curriculum and the related physical and material infrastructure. This will build on existing initiatives such as eco- and healthy-schools and North-South linking (ie links between developed and developing countries).
- Undertake to include sustainable development and global citizenship in the review of future requirements for Education Strategic Plans and School Improvement Plans. This would be supported by appraisal guidance, and backed up by Estyn's inspection.
- Review the place of sustainable development and global citizenship in the curriculum as part of ACCAC's current curriculum review;
- In the light of the pilot work currently underway, introduce sustainable development and global citizenship as a module in initial and induction training opportunities for teachers and develop specific Continual Professional Development training.
- Issue specific guidance to FE and HE establishments on mainstreaming sustainable development and global citizenship as part of their strategic planning.

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 SD 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. SD 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. For Welsh companies in particular there will be opportunities to benefit from this change.

The Welsh Procurement Initiative is already undertaking and piloting work to put in place the foundations for sustainable procurement. In addition, we now propose to:

- review Assembly standard contract specifications to ensure they are based on sustainable development best practice
- through the Welsh Procurement Initiative, support and enable the Welsh public sector to apply best practice to its procurement, including issuing guidance and case studies that clarify the regulatory framework and tools, and training to enable public sector procurement professionals to effect change;
- give guidance and support to suppliers so that they can adapt and take advantage of new opportunities;
- use existing business support mechanisms to help Welsh companies take maximum advantage of the opportunities this change will present.

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 enabled capacity within the voluntary sector to grow enormously, enabling them to play a key role in the delivery of services and projects.

Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies in turn are responsible for major grant schemes. The aims, conditions and monitoring arrangements for these grants are a major influence over the way grant recipients behave.

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

We propose to review our existing grants in order to:

- 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.

We also propose to ask our sponsored bodies to do the same.

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 food around 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 by creating markets and shaping supply chains.

There is already a great deal of action in hand. The introduction of school breakfasts recognises the links between what children eat and their educational performance. This is in addition to fruit in tuckshops and other local initiatives, such as food co-operatives and the large-scale pilot work in Powys. .

To take this central issue forward, we now propose to:

- review the scope for changing food procurement in 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.

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 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).

As a responsible employer the Assembly Government is already applying best practice through actions such as ensuring that land owned by the Assembly does not pose an actual or potential threat to man and the natural and built environment, ensuring that the conservation of species and habitats is respected, using 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 now propose to:

- seek to achieve Green Dragon level 5 by [2007];
- ensure future choice of Ministerial cars that offer the least polluting option whilst also meeting Ministers' security requirements;
- ensure all future catering contracts reflect the Assembly's sustainable development commitments, including those to Fairtrade;
- test future location decisions against public transport accessibility criteria;
- set the highest possible standards of environmental performance for new buildings we commission;
- promote best practice in all public estates, starting by building on the excellent pilot work on energy efficiency in Welsh Health Estates with the Carbon Trust.

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 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 sustainable development indicators; and
- Commissioning and publishing an independent report on the effectiveness of the Scheme. (This was the report prepared by CAG Consultants, published by us in October 2003. It drew on views of external stakeholders, as presented in the Davidoff Report, which we published in June 2003.)

We now propose to take this work forward significantly by:

- Extending our sustainable development indicators, as detailed in the following section;
- Ensuring that all 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, which we were the first government in the world to adopt 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 made some recommendations on these issues, and is working to finalise others.

To extend and enhance our indicators of sustainable development, and to make more use of them, we now propose:

- To identify 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, taking account of environmental factors, resources and well-being;
- To use these in raising awareness of what we are trying to achieve;
- To finalise additional indicators on the basis of the Indicators Working Group's recommendations;
- To use the full Indicator set, reflecting cultural, social, economic and environmental issues, to gauge progress towards sustainable development, as part of its performance management framework, and to inform the development of its approach to appraisal.