

RECOMMENDATIONS

OUTLINE RECOMMENDATIONS

The main body of this report consists of the recommendations for action that could be taken at all levels of Society, together with recommendations to Government on appropriate support for the implementation of such actions. These are the ones on which consensus has been achieved to date. We hope that by publishing these recommendations in this report, we can catalyse further discussion to identify the practical actions which can be taken in future to ensure these recommendations are implemented widely.

The recommendations are summarised as follows:

FOOD ISSUES

Education and Health

F1. RECOMMENDATION

As a starting point, food teaching should be re-established within schools. This will include growing, shopping, cooking – making the pupils get a real sense of the food 'stages' – from seed to plate.

Consumption at the nearest point to production and encouraging seasonality of fresh food

F2. RECOMMENDATION

Local government is urged to look at the sustainability of food consumption within its community, emphasising local production wherever possible.

F3. RECOMMENDATION

The UK Government should give greater support to farmers' markets. Although at present these markets only represent a small percentage of food consumed in the UK they are providing a good source of 'quality' foods for the surrounding inhabitants, education on food production and most importantly a good source of income for many cash stricken farmers.

F4. RECOMMENDATION

A communication strategy should be established by the UK Government to increase the awareness of local production for local consumption.

The full costs of food production and disposal

F5. RECOMMENDATION

Food costs should cover the full cost of the production, transportation and disposal and should be equitably allocated, such that the price accurately reflects all the inputs and impacts.

DOMESTIC GOODS ISSUES

Consumer attitudes on Domestic Goods

D1. RECOMMENDATION

A new consumer communications mechanism is needed which helps make the link between personal behaviour and the consequences of current actions and decision making.

Information to Consumers – accessibility and understanding information

D2. RECOMMENDATION

The UK Government should continually promote 'responsible choices' through accurate and sufficient knowledge regarding 'concerned consumer' issues. This could be supported through various fiscal measures and the full support and development of independent eco-labels.

D3. RECOMMENDATION

In order to encourage change in consumer behaviour all information should be fully accessible, in the right place at the right time.

Role of the retailer

D4. RECOMMENDATION

Retailers should look at innovative approaches to achieve more sustainable consumption patterns, for example, giving extra reward points to people who buy sustainable products.

Role of Local Authority

D5. RECOMMENDATION

Local Authorities should increase awareness about sustainable development through public service advertising. They should also consider initiatives such as giving awards or council tax breaks as incentives for environmental improvements (e.g. recycling).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Shift from product to service

D6. RECOMMENDATION

Further research is required to assess the viability of shifting from buying products to accessing 'product-based services'.

Sustainable design of domestic products

D7. RECOMMENDATION

There should be better definition and promotion of more 'sustainable' consumer products. A product should optimise the following:

- Recognising any 'replacements' are equal or better in terms of price, quality, service, lifetime, attractiveness.
- Recycled content of raw materials used
- Recyclability of product at end of life
- Service life and 'fashion life' extension
- Durability,
- Upgradeability,
- Fair trade/production issues (social/ethical).

D8. RECOMMENDATION

Sustainability concerns should be addressed as early as possible in the design stage of products.

Knowledge transfer

D9. RECOMMENDATION

The UK Government should establish knowledge transfer schemes in the areas of business sustainability and design, particularly for small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

D10. RECOMMENDATION

Large companies should establish partnerships to transfer knowledge to SMEs to help them achieve greater sustainability, particularly in the production phase.

PERSONAL TRANSPORT ISSUES

Practical action for framework

T1. RECOMMENDATION

The UK Government should facilitate wider communication of flagship projects which incorporate greater sustainability in transport systems.

Transport decision making

T2. RECOMMENDATION

The UK Government should reconsider the political levels at which transport decisions are made.

Communication and Education

T3. RECOMMENDATION

Although Government Departments may have different priorities, a clear and consistent message should be communicated centrally.

T4. RECOMMENDATION

Local councils should be encouraged to provide information about their sustainable transport programmes to all members of their community.

T5. RECOMMENDATION

Relevant information needs to be provided for people to make informed and conscious decisions about how they travel.

T6. RECOMMENDATION

The UK Government should have greater influence over car advertising, if necessary by increased regulation.

T7. RECOMMENDATION

The Government should encourage the advertising industry to adopt more socially/environmentally responsible approaches to product promotion and to advise its clients accordingly. This can be developed further by offering full support from both government and industry to the UNEP Advertising and Communication Forum on Sustainability programme.

www.unep.org/pc/sustain/advertising/advertising.htm

RECOMMENDATIONS

Communicating the benefits of improved health

T8. RECOMMENDATION

The UK Government should promote the health benefits of reduced car use, particularly to help overcome potential resistance from car drivers.

Partnerships and Regulation

T9. RECOMMENDATION

The UK Government should further encourage the establishment of green business travel plans.

Localisation

T10. RECOMMENDATION

Local Government and businesses should cooperate to establish integrated transport systems in support of inner city developments. This would reverse the current trend towards decentralisation of basic services and the splitting of communities.

Domestic air travel

T11. RECOMMENDATION

The UK Government should encourage further dialogue on the sustainability of flying domestic short haul air routes, with a view to encouraging a switch to alternatives, especially rail.

DOMESTIC WATER ISSUES

International conference on freshwater

W1. RECOMMENDATION

The UK Government should actively promote and adopt the recommendations of the Bonn accord.

Sustainable water & education

W2. RECOMMENDATION

Education should be provided for all on domestic and global water consumption and production, specifically for target audiences in drought areas.

Usage awareness

W3. RECOMMENDATION

A mechanism is required for relating public water usage to cost. Although there was no consensus on how this can be achieved, it was agreed that individuals needed to be motivated to save water.

Climate change

W4. RECOMMENDATION

The link between energy conservation and water should be emphasised in public education and awareness programmes as the climate change message is more widely spread than the need for water conservation.

Water efficiency awards

W5. RECOMMENDATION

Water Efficiency awards should be promoted more widely – for example using high profile public buildings as case studies.

Water Saving Trust

W6. RECOMMENDATION

The UK Government should consider the development of a 'Water Saving Trust'.

Water Industry

W7. RECOMMENDATION

The UK Government should review the water industry structure, as political barriers are seen as the most difficult obstacle to overcome.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Building Regulations

W8. RECOMMENDATION

There should be a tightening of building regulations for water. Precautionary action on water and climate change should be incorporated into water planning.

Drinking water

W9. RECOMMENDATION

Local planning departments should have increased powers to introduce water efficiency specifications in new buildings. These should be based on the regional degree of water stress but should introduce good practice throughout the country.

W10. RECOMMENDATION

The sustainability of drinking water, both mains and bottled, should be thoroughly reviewed.

DOMESTIC ENERGY ISSUES

Top-down implementation

E1. RECOMMENDATION

There should be public sector and local government commitment to energy efficiency in purchasing decisions in order to help stimulate grassroots action.

E2. RECOMMENDATION

A single body/ commission/ trust should be established for sustainable energy, to co-ordinate all practical actions including research and development.

Bottom up strategies

E3. RECOMMENDATION

Increasing public awareness and engagement is key to successful implementation of energy efficiency programmes. The UK Government should support and stimulate changes in public behaviour, to overcome barriers to a sustainable energy future.

Energy Partnerships

E4. RECOMMENDATION

Initiatives that promote low carbon technologies and greater efficiency should be fun and inspiring, involving the community through schools, museums, galleries and other public buildings.

E5. RECOMMENDATION

Partnerships should be encouraged between business, government and the public to engage all stakeholders in achieving sustainable energy objectives.

Energy and Property

E6. RECOMMENDATION

Property leasing companies must be targeted, as most commercial/residential tenants have little control/influence over the energy efficiency of their buildings.