

# Regional Development Agencies delivering Sustainable Development



***“to transform England’s regions through sustainable economic development”***  
(RDA mission statement)

The Regional Development Agencies were established in 1999 with 5 statutory responsibilities

- further economic development and regeneration
- promote business efficiency, investment and competitiveness
- promote employment
- enhance development and application of skills relevant to employment
- contribute to sustainable development in the UK -This statutory duty was recently augmented with race, disability and age discrimination duties.

RDAs have worked individually and collectively to establish how current activities contribute to aspects of sustainable development. *Smart Growth* shares a wealth of examples of RDA best practice, delivering sustainable development through considering the impact of projects on the economy, environment and society. *Smart Productivity* brought together an evidence base of RDA interventions supporting both regional economic growth and sustainable development principles.

With a remit to use the ~£2B annual funding to address market failures and act as the funder of ‘last resort’, considerable work has been done on addressing climate change and preparing regions for a low carbon future. RDAs have helped businesses focus on carbon reduction, drive the growth of innovative businesses through R&D support, create sustainable energy markets and attract global investment in environmental products and services to the regions. In 2007 RDAs pledged to work towards becoming carbon neutral by 2010 and contribute to regional action plans implemented by climate change partnerships. This is complimented by the private sector’s willingness to develop the low carbon economy. In addition

- The Energy White Paper recognised that RDAs were to lead on strategic energy issues for the region and provided a detailed list of activity.
- The Climate Change bill, although not providing specific responsibilities for RDAs, will have implications for our activities through binding carbon targets. The Government’s intention in this area has also been reinforced by key policy statements by the Prime Minister around increased investment in low carbon technology, building standards, and potential higher carbon reduction targets.

- The formal role of RDAs in leading on economic recovery from natural disasters was recognised by the Government in the aftermath of the Summer floods.
- Regions have also engaged with academic partners to develop alternative or additional measures of progress alongside GVA. For example, the Regional Index of Sustainable Economic Well-being (R-ISEW) is a much improved methodology for measuring economic wellbeing at the regional level. As a composite indicator it seeks to measure different factors relating to economic wellbeing and to create a single performance indicator. By responding to the evolving policy context within which RDAs operate, R-ISEW gives a powerful signal of RDA commitment to sustainable development which should continue to be explored and enhanced.
- RDAs play a key role on future skills requirements e.g. The LDA is working with national skills providers on training for environmental technologies and helping establish a London forum to address and identify the sector issues relating to the Green Skills agenda.
- The Technology Strategy Board (TSB), SICs and the RDAs have agreed to collaborate to support innovation priorities that deliver the National Technology Strategy and Regional Economic Strategies. Engagement is underway between the RDAs and the TSB with a detailed prospectus outlining opportunities for alignment in technology, skills and on strategy and research. Once agreed, the RDAs will work to align our investment with these national programmes. A number of areas have been identified for short-term alignment including Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, Plastic Electronics and Low-Carbon Vehicles.
- RDAs have played a key role in mainstreaming business resource efficiency (BRE) (using the BRE pathfinder pilot) within Business link. This work is being taken forward by the RDAs, LGA, central Government and other stakeholders through an IDB task and finish group.
- The £2.5B ERDF (2007-2013) managed by the RDAs is distributed based on SD principles and has a specific low carbon theme in a number of regions.
- The sub-national review has important sustainable development implications such as developing an integrated economic, social and environmental regional strategy, and the practical implications of taking on of more functions by the RDA while delegating others.

*Further details of how individual RDAs have integrated SD principles and processes are set out below.*

## **London Development Agency**

### **Cross-cutting themes**

Alongside the statutory requirement for the LDA to deliver sustainable economic development in the London region, we are fully committed to promoting safer, greener and healthier communities through economic development, as a GLA Group member accountable to the Mayor of London. To support this commitment, we strive to embed 4 primary cross-cutting themes into the length and breadth of our activities and programmes, including:

- **Health** - we invest in health-related activities that support the health sector in London.
- **Sustainability** - we consider the long-term economic, environmental and social implications of the way we work.
- **Equality** - we strive to tackle discrimination, and promote equality and positive community relations.
- **Community safety** - we support strategies that reduce crime and disorder and promote community safety.

### **Corporate Investment Process**

Project Development Managers are required to consider the impact of the 4 cross-cutting themes at both the Strategic and Business Case stages of the LDA's internal funding approval process or CIP. Specifically, at the Business Case stage, PDMs complete Impact Assessments that consider Sustainability and Community Safety, Health and Equalities within the context of their developing project, thus ensuring that specific actions are realised within the procurement, delivery and evaluation of a future project or investment decision, so that sustainable outcomes are realised at the point of delivery (see "Measuring Outcomes" for indicators used).

### **Corporate Plan 2007/10**

([http://www.lda.gov.uk/upload/pdf/LDA\\_Corporate\\_Plan\\_2007-2010\\_20070912130506.pdf](http://www.lda.gov.uk/upload/pdf/LDA_Corporate_Plan_2007-2010_20070912130506.pdf) - page 82)

In 2007-10 Corporate Plan, the LDA set challenging targets for equalities to ensure positive outcomes from our programmes for beneficiaries in terms of ethnicity, gender and disability. In addition, the plan also outlined that we had begun to introduce sustainable development indicators that have been agreed by the GLA Group, including CO2 emissions and LDA contribution.

### **Corporate Investment Strategy (2008-2012)**

During the development of the LDA's new Corporate Investment Strategy (which now replaces the Corporate Plan), we have moved towards a more integrated approach regarding the consideration of SD issues within corporate planning, with cross-cutting theme impact assessments conducted in relation to all 4 of the above areas. A similar process will be conducted for the CIS refreshment to cover 2009-2012.

### **Measuring Outcomes**

To measure the success of our third party interventions that are delivered by partner organisations, we use a range of outputs and outcomes within our contracts or grant agreements, to evidence how we are delivering on objectives, including those relating to SD. The SD outputs/outcomes cover a broad range of indicators, including:

- Housing for Londoners
- Brownfield Land Reclaimed and/or Redeveloped
- Carbon Dioxide Savings
- Sustained Employment
- Sustained Business Growth
- Hectares of Land Developed, including public green space created
- Amount of Construction Waste from LDA Developments Reused/Recycled
- Employability Support
- Skills Development
- Responsible Procurement
- Business Support, including referrals for environmental support and quantifiable environmental improvements resulting from funded interventions

### **Internal Operations**

In terms of our office-based environmental impacts, the LDA monitors areas that include our energy and water usage or the amount of waste recycled, which forms a part of our corporate performance reports.

### **South West Regional Development Agency Corporate Plan**

Sustainable Development lies at the heart of our strategy for economic growth; which is productivity led, is within environmental limits and takes into account the needs and opportunities of key places in the region.

To show leadership for a low carbon, resource efficient economy in the region the South West RDA also aims to reduce its carbon impact year on year and, by 2013, for the net carbon impact of our annual investment portfolio to be zero.

### **Project investments**

To ensure that SD principles are embedded into all of our projects, case officers are required to complete a SD appraisal of the proposal at the initial concept stage and again as the project progresses through technical assessment. To assist them a Sustainability matchmaker toolkit with technical guidance of good practice has been developed. For all build projects case officers must also ensure that an environmental risk assessment and environmental management plans are in place. South West RDA also use the Sustainability Checklist, developed by Future Foundations, to help achieve best practice in built environment sustainable development in the South West.

### **European programmes**

Sustainable development is also embedded within our European Programmes and all projects are assessed for their contribution to environment, equality and diversity.

### **Corporate operations**

South West RDA have implemented an Environmental Management System to identify, minimise and manage any environmental risk associated with our operations and have achieved registration with ISO 14001. We also monitor our resource usage, waste generated, materials recycled and business mileage to develop our corporate carbon footprint and have action plans in place to reduce this year on year. We have also implemented a sustainable procurement action plan.

To further our aspiration for a net zero carbon annual investment portfolio by 2013 we are working with our staff to develop robust operating principles and methodologies to assess our carbon impact

South West RDA Board and Senior Executives have attended a Sustainable Development masterclass to ensure that sustainable development is well understood and championed at senior level.

### **Regional Capacity in Sustainable Development**

The South West RDA core funds Sustainability South West, the independent champion body for sustainable development in the South West to raise awareness and provide guidance and support for action on sustainability.

### **One North East**

One North East have established a strong strategic framework for setting the North East's priorities in innovation through the creation of a powerful Science and Industry Council. By involving key players – including universities, the private sector, local authorities and Government. One North East have put in place the Centres of Excellence as the main delivery vehicles as drivers for change and with the capacity to take advantage of development opportunities.

**Activities:**

**Energy - £75.7m (2008-13)**

Over the next five years we will actively support the development and application of new energy technologies in a number of key areas, including

- Developing a Science Partnership with Durham and Newcastle Universities
- Building on the success achieved in bringing together a research consortium to bid for Energy Technologies Institute (ETI) by strengthening collaborative research capacity
- Establishing an international hub for new energy technologies which will support existing businesses and attract new business investment.
  
- Developing the Energy Leadership Council to provide strategic direction to industry and academics
- Supporting a focus on: energy for the marine environment; low-carbon fuels and fuelling systems; and energy systems and networks e.g. Energy Services Companies (ESCO) to deliver new approaches to low-carbon activities as a driver for best practice across the region
  
- Aligning the regeneration of Blyth by completing the construction of the New and Renewable Energy Centre (NaREC) Technology Park campus and its related facilities. NaREC is working closely as both a strategic and delivery partner of the Energy Technologies Institute (ETI) to take forward its offshore wind, marine and distributed energy activities.
  
- Helping to deliver the development of the renewable energy/low-carbon economy in Tees Valley, particularly the potential for bio refining, clean coal gasification, heavy oil upgrades, production of energy from waste and the hydrogen economy

**Carbon Budgeting:**

Examples of key initiatives include:

- The GHG inventory provides a carbon baseline for the North East. To meet targets we will build upon the work of the North East Climate Change Partnership of which the Agency, Government Office North East and the North East Assembly are all key partners.
  
- One North East have established an internal 'Carbon Group' which involves the lead person from each of the cross-cutting work areas that have an impact on carbon reduction targets (e.g. Regeneration, skills). This will ensure

the Agency is smart in measuring its carbon reduction across the broad spectrum of programmes. The group is now in discussions to build carbon reduction targets into the Agency Business Process through a Sustainability Appraisal Toolkit. Furthermore, a group is now identifying regional carbon targets which will be scrutinised by our Energy Leadership Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2008.

- One North East funds Community Energy Solutions which develops innovative solutions for fuel poverty and the Energy Resource Efficiency Programme (EREP) through North East Productivity Alliance. EREP reduces emissions by streamlining manufacturing processes facilitated by the direct support to businesses in the region from Midas and the Carbon Trust.
- The Agency's 'Carbon Group' will work with the national RDA Task and Finish carbon accounting group to identify best practice from existing RDA models to achieve One North East's Energy White Paper commitments.

## **North West Development Agency**

### **1 . Internal Operations**

The NWDA gained ISO14001 status in December 2007. To ensure the ongoing continuous development that is required by ISO14001 we are seeking to take forward a number of actions that are developed as part of delivering the system and ensuring good environmental practice is put in place within the scope of the EMS which is:

- The management of Headquarters and the centralised management decision making processes that affects sub regional offices such as utility suppliers and purchase of office equipment and services.
- The process (known as the Single Programme) which provides the mechanism for the Agency to initiate, develop, deliver and evaluate the investment in projects which deliver the Regional Economic Strategy. In addition, the project will undertake research, development and maintenance activities to ensure the agency meets its statutory duty to promote sustainable development, including:
  1. Development of the EMS
  2. Continual assessment of NWDA's Carbon Footprint (NWDA's corporate objective for climate change and sustainable production and consumption is a carbon reduction target of 5% year on year (staff and buildings) based on 2006/07 figures. This equates to combined reduction of 14.3% or 422 carbon tonnes)
  3. Maintenance of and support for the Sustainable Buildings Policy
  4. Sustainability appraisals
  5. Maintenance and promotion of appraisal tools
  6. Policy research activities

#### **1.1 Fully recycled waste stream**

Waste is one of the priority areas within the ISO14001 Environmental Management System (EMS), so we have addressed so we have have a contract in place to re-cycle the all waste from Warrington and Liverpool Offices. The Agency has now switched all of its A4 copying paper to 100% recycled paper, which helps saves trees and reduces our carbon footprint as recycled paper needs less energy to manufacture.

## 1.2 Wind Turbine

We have made a commitment to renewable energy by officially launching a state-of-the-art Wind Turbine at our Headquarters in May. Standing almost 25 metres high, the turbine feeds directly into the Agency's electrical supply and will result in significant Co2 emission savings. Statistics relating to the energy generated are also displayed on an interactive monitor in the reception area.

## 2 . ERDF & Single Programme

As part of the assessment process that all programmes and projects have to go through before they are approved we have now integrated how programmes and projects will contribute to SD principles. Below are a few examples of processes and tools which we have employed to integrate SD considerations into development and assist the decision making process.

### 2 .1 Carbon Calculator

The Carbon Calculator has been integrated with our project toolkit and will be used on all projects over £250,000, irrespective of whether they are revenue or capital funded. Implementing the calculator will enable the CO2 impacts of ERDF and Single Programme projects to be measured, to enable us to meet The North West Operational Plan Global Target 3 - a 25% reduction in CO2 in relation to GVA and our commitments in the Energy White Paper of establishing our carbon footprint for the single programme. The calculator will only be used for single programme projects that have not currently been contracted or are under appraisal, it will not be used retrospectively on single programme projects, however all ERDF projects over £250,000 will need to complete the calculator. Work is currently underway to develop an online carbon calculator that will be more intuitive and provide a better interface for users.

### 2 .2 Sustainable Buildings Policy

The policy outlines the approach that the NWDA takes in identifying, assessing and evaluating all proposals for construction capital grants by Project Applicants seeking NWDA funding. It identifies 10 key policy objectives for example, Carbon, Waste and Water, which are assessed either through performance measurement or commitment by the Project Applicant to undertake specific actions. By the application of a variety of different approaches, all of the policy objectives are addressed. As part of the policy a Sustainability Checklist for Developments has been devised specifically to guide the design of new regeneration developments by making sense of current policy and highlights best practice, complementing Ecohomes and the Code for Sustainable Homes. It covers regionally specific sustainability and planning issues, emphasising those of higher priority. It can also be adapted to reflect locally significant concerns.

SD principles are fundamental building blocks in any programme and project that SEEDA developments. Before any spend is approved there is a rigorous 'Project Appraisal' assessment process that all programmes and projects have to go through before they are approved. A major element of this process is how each programme and project will contribute to SD principles. All projects over £250K go to an expert programme board for final agreement/amendment. Projects under £250K also go to the board for noting.

SEEDA have developed an EMS of which we have attained ISO14001 for phase 1 which includes all our office and travel activities. We are currently developing phase II (programmes and influence) as we develop the new 'Programme Office' (which will provide a new programme and project planning tool). Through establishing the EMS SEEDA has now developed a baseline and is setting environmental standards for our own operations.

**East Midlands Development Agency**

Contributing to SD is delivered through *emda's* functions as a corporate entity, regional influencer and investment/grant maker, all set against a policy context which emphasizes the different aspects of SD, including:

- Energy White Paper 2007
- HM Cabinet Social Exclusion Action Plan
- Sustainable Procurement Task Force report
- The National Climate Change Programme

In order to demonstrate this contribution to SD, *emda* is developing a sustainable development framework (SDF). A sustainable development framework is a document which helps to identify, capture and demonstrate SD performance across the Agency, whilst supporting the integration of SD within wider corporate planning processes (Corporate Plan, Business planning etc). In support of the SDF, *emda* is also mainstreaming SD across 5 priority areas:

1. Corporate and estates management
2. Accountability & reporting
3. Procurement & contracting
4. Workforce development & capacity building
5. (Single Programme) Project appraisal

***emda's* sustainable development framework (SDF)**

The SDF provides an overarching strategic framework for *emda's* activities and helps demonstrate our commitment to SD through the following key corporate priorities:

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<p><b>1. Corporate &amp; estates management action plan</b> Mitigating environmental impacts &amp; achieving resource</p>	<p><b>2. Accountability &amp; Reporting action plan</b> Mechanisms for capturing, monitoring and reporting on <i>emda's</i> SD</p>	<p><b>3. Workforce development &amp; capacity building action plan</b> Integrating SD into existing <i>emda</i>/SSP learning &amp;</p>	<p><b>4. Sustainable procurement &amp; contracting action plan</b> Reflecting and supporting SD through Agency</p>	<p><b>5. Project appraisal action plan</b> Integration of SD issues into Agency project appraisal</p>
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efficiency	performance	staff development	procurement activity	processes
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### East of England Development Agency

EEDA has Environmental Management System to ISO14001 Eco-Management and Auditing Scheme (EMAS) accreditation and has committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2010. To achieve that goal, the Agency has calculated its own carbon footprint and identified targets for reducing emissions.

EEDA's internal communications campaign Be Green with Envi ensures all staff understand, and work to deliver against, high environmental standards. Staff are also engaged in a three-year programme of training and awareness raising on the importance of sustainability and how to be more efficient with resources. A group of 'Energy Champions' has been established to lead an energy reduction campaign based on a Carbon Trust Energy Review. The volume of waste generated by the Agency is also being addressed, working towards the aim of implementing a zero waste policy.

Working with Inspire East, EEDA has developed the Excellence Framework, based on the Sustainable Communities Plan. The Framework is a whole lifecycle project management sustainability tool and its standards underpin all the Agency's investment decisions. Any project that receives EEDA funding is required to use the framework to help guide and inform projects through all stages of its development and to meet minimum standards.

Further details : <http://www.inspire-east.org.uk/welcome.aspx>

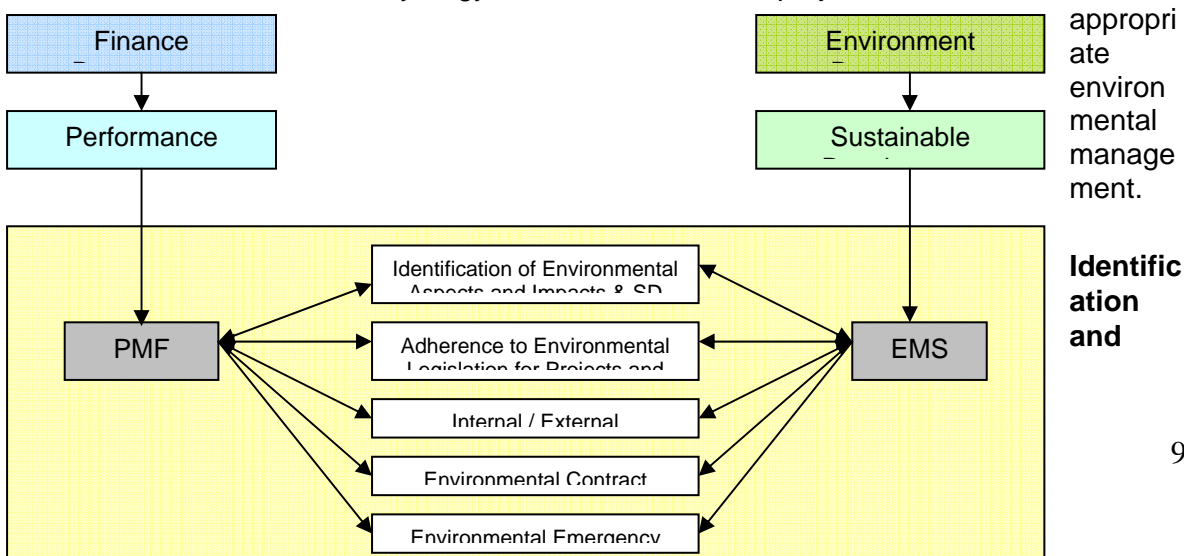
EEDA has also produced and piloted an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal which was used to help produce the East of England RES. This model has been recognised as best practice by Berr and CLG. More details can be found on [www.eastofengland.uk.com/RES](http://www.eastofengland.uk.com/RES)

The new regional economic strategy (RES) includes challenging targets for the region to reduce CO2 emissions; by 60 per cent by 2031 and by up to 80 per cent by 2050.

### Yorkshire Forward

#### Project Based Activities

PMs manage projects via through the Performance Management Framework (PMF) part of which is the identification of any significant environmental issues. The PMF and EMS work in close synergy to ensure offices and projects both receive



## Evaluation of Impacts and Aspects

The Performance Management Framework (PMF) provides steps to identify manage and monitor significant environmental issues. Project Development Managers (PDMs) can use this information to improve the quality of project sustainability and good environmental practice. The environmental content and requirements included within the PMF system are included below:

- Stage 1/2 -The Sustainable Development and Greenhouse Gas Tool is completed

The Sustainable Development team are involved in Sustainability Appraisals

- Stage 3 - The PDM expands the environmental issues identified via the OBP and Sustainability Appraisal and state how they will be managed. Identify if any designated sites will be impacted.
- Stage 5 - The PDM sets out the specific Environmental Contract Requirements to enable management of the impacts.

The PDM send out selected inclusions with tender documents:

- Sustainable Procurement in your organisation form
- Stage 5 – Buy recycled paper guidance
- Stage 5 – Buy recycled construction guidance

- Stage 6 - The PDM ensures the EMS is being implemented, that sustainability appraisal outcomes are responded to, and that environmental issues included in environmental clauses are still applicable.

The internal audit team undertake audits

- Stage 7 - Lessons learned are reported via Evaluation review with EMR feeding back outcomes to senior management

## Definitions

Environmental Aspect: Elements of YF activities that can interact with the environment

Environmental Impact: Any change to the environment caused by the aspect (e.g. waste disposal to land). Aspects and impacts can be either adverse or beneficial.

Normal Conditions: Day-to-day activities and operations e.g. greenhouse gases emissions

Abnormal Conditions: Impacts occurring through special or hazardous materials.

Accident / Emergency Conditions: Accidents or incidents that may still occur, and the environmental impacts associated with these, e.g. spillage of oils, diesel or chemicals.

Direct Environmental Impacts: Those which can be directly controlled by YF e.g. contamination of land and energy and water consumption.

Indirect Environmental Impacts: Those over which Yorkshire Forward can reasonably be expected to have either the ability or responsibility to exert influence e.g. effects of the use of transport in support of YF activities and the effects of suppliers in providing materials.

## Advantage West Midlands

## 1. Background

1.1 The Agency's challenge is to fund and influence economic development that delivers sustainable development that supports long term economic, social and environmental benefits for the region and addresses wider global challenges.

1.2 The Agency's approach to sustainable development has evolved over time.

- Independent sustainability appraisals (economic, social, and environmental assessments) have been conducted on the various versions of the West Midlands Economic Strategy and Action Plans produced since 1999. Each version has shown considerable progress.
- Support for partners to build capacity around these issues has included creating and supporting organisations such as Sustainability West Midlands, Energy West Midlands, Bioenergy West Midlands, the Economic Inclusion Panel, and the production of regional strategies such as the Sustainable Development Framework and Energy Strategy.
- Project and programme funding for a range of economic regeneration or development activity has increasingly delivered additional social and environmental outcomes. Work on environmental economy, social enterprise and economic inclusion has identified and developed specific programmes.
- Securing the hosting of the national Energy Technology Institute through a joint bid with Birmingham, Nottingham and Loughborough Universities has further reinforced our regional strengths in this area.
- In 2005 the Agency assessed its performance with partners against a sustainability benchmark of good practice for regional organisations. This confirmed that good progress was being made in many areas, but a number of challenges remained around 'mainstreaming' sustainable development into our processes. As a result the Agency developed with partners a Sustainable Development Policy and three year Action plan for the Agency to demonstrate a more corporate approach to the delivery of the 'cross-cutting theme' of sustainable development within the Agency corporate plan. This plan was approved by the Board in February 2006 and an update on progress provided in December 2006.
- The National Audit Office assessment in January 2007 has confirmed that AWM is a leading RDA in sustainable development with good progress across a number of areas demonstrated by the 'results' of key flagship programmes such as Windsupply and the National Industrial Symbiosis Programme delivering benefits for the region and being replicated elsewhere, and the 'process' of learning from good practice and developing the first SD policy and action plan for an RDA. The subsequent improvement plan reinforces the need to ensure the implementation of the SD policy and action plan and to improve communications around what we are doing in this area.
- The results in late 2007 of our stakeholder survey included questions around sustainable development for the first time and identified that 70% of our stakeholders felt we were doing well on promoting sustainable development,

with only 55% believing we were actively helping other organisations and partners tackle the sustainable development agenda. These findings reinforce the need to build on our success and share this by working with partners to improve the rapid learning and deployment of solutions around this agenda.

## **2. Summary of progress on the AWM SD Policy and Action Plan**

2.1 The Agency SD Policy and Action Plan covers the remaining period of our current Corporate Plan, up until March 2008, but includes milestones for 2008/9 to meet 2009/10 targets. It has five aims, which are:

- Future proofing – using longer term thinking to prepare for the future and drive innovation;
- The Business Case - ensure that Business takes a lead on Sustainable Development;
- Sustainable Procurement – encouraging market growth in sustainable products, services, and businesses;
- Leadership – enabling our leaders to secure our future; and
- Healthy Society – improving health of our workforce and region.

## **3. Future Proofing**

3.1 The West Midlands Futures project produced a list of 19 key future drivers and uncertainties for the region and has been used extensively to ‘future proof’ the development of the WMES through the wider sustainability appraisal. The regional minister’s regional future summit in October 2007 drew extensively on this work to identify key regional opportunities around environmental and medical technologies.

3.2 We have commissioned more detailed work on the economic implications of climate impacts and developing a low carbon economy as part of the WMES evidence base, which will be disseminated more widely in 2008.

3.3 Long-term issues such energy / carbon and climate adaptation have been built into the new sustainable development, built environment and design standards for our project system in September 2007. Relevant short-medium term issues such as environmental legislation, energy saving, and diversification that link to longer term challenges have been built into Business Link West Midlands support.

3.4 We are continuing to jointly fund the region climate change adaptation coordinator and partnership and are investigating the future form and function of EnergyWM, both of which will support the GOWM led climate change team.

3.5 We are working with the Board Champion for Future Generations (Sue Prince) on the type of strategic support that is required for this role. For example we have recently appointed a sustainable futures researcher to support the AWM SD team and ‘futures’ issues.

3.6 The major achievement for 2007 has been recognition by our Regional Minister, BERR, and other stakeholders, such as Jonathon Porritt, the Government’s Sustainable Development Adviser, that all our work around sustainable development has resulted in the UK’s first low carbon regional economic strategy,

launched in December 2007. The challenge now is to follow this through into the appropriate programmes in the Delivery Framework and our Corporate Plan.

## **Business Case**

- 4.1 We worked with key progressive sustainable development companies, such as Bulmers, Carrillion, Severn-Trent, Arup, to ensure their views were fed into the WMES review. However our ambitions are for creating a collective voice 'Business Futures' to represent the needs of future businesses for region, many of which are not located here yet, and to use the focus of the top 100 companies in the region to provide peer support on good practice to each other and their supply and disposal chains. We have supported a number of events such as the Prince of Wales May Day event, and the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Climate Change Conference, but still need to develop a more strategic programme for this work.
- 4.2 The work of the Environmental Technology Cluster and Science City continues to deliver economic development around diversification, resource efficiency, and innovation. With a low carbon WMES the challenge is now to ensure these benefits are fully realised by other business areas, such as building technologies, transport, food and drink, while also trying to simplify business support around this agenda.
- 4.3 The use and development of the carbon assessment tool on particular projects is also including the cost savings and with the addition of the new Government 'shadow price of carbon' should help our investment decisions. More work is being done on the phased roll-out and the type of information to provide for investment decisions.
- 4.4 The development of an environmental management system for the Agency's main office has started with an environmental review and an action plan to go out to staff for consultation prior to agreement by CMT. This will be linked to our efficiency plan and balanced scorecard reporting for the Agency. This is a key priority for the remaining quarter to demonstrate to staff and partners our commitment and follow through on this agenda from our funding to our workplace.

## **5. Procurement**

- 5.1 As discussed a series of changes have been implemented in our project system during 2006 with them being brought together in September 2007 as part of major changes in our project system.
- 5.2 Part of these changes includes working on behalf of the region with the WMRA to produce a regional planning checklist for developers and planners to assess development proposals against, national, regional and local policy. This was launched at an oversubscribed event with WMRA and WM Centre for Constructing Excellence in May 2007 and now forms part of our built environment and design standards within our project system. This was piloted with developers and partners on our key flagship sites prior to adoption in September 2007. Feedback from the Carbon Trust and Building Research Establishment state that this work now makes us a leading RDA in this area, while our commitment to follow through into legal agreements over the last 6 months has led to a reported

demand for environmental consultancy within the region. We have also recently been praised by Government on our work in this area.

We have also closely worked with ERDF programme to ensure its sustainable development criteria are streamlined and align with the Agency systems. This has been recognised as good practice by the Commission, and helped prevent an unrealistic amount of sustainable criteria being imposed.

5.3 Other areas of procurement we are seeking to tackle is a better practicable understanding of how to use whole life costs within our project appraisal, working to join- up a range of social, economic, and environmental aims with wider public sector procurement to drive new regional markets and better long-term outcomes, and ensure our new environmental system looks at areas such as our food, publications and events.

## **6. Leadership**

6.1 Training and capacity building has been focused on strategic awareness raising with the Board and staff with a series of sessions with Jonathon Porritt in January 2007, and a range of training around the new project standards, carbon assessment tool, and business link offer, with the development team, partnership teams, project and contracts teams, planning team, business link gateway and advisers. Broader awareness raising has been through items in internal communications and been delayed to tie in with the consultation and implementation of the office environmental management system.

6.2 Work is ongoing with HR to ensure our systems such as induction, training and performance management help to deliver the commitments within the SD policy and action plan. For example developing a relevant cascade of objectives to Director or team leader level tailored to deliver the SD action plan.

6.3 We have begun to address the perception gap between our activity on sustainable development and external partner's awareness through improved reporting to Government, contributing to publications, and sponsoring a range of events and publications, such as the CBI regional environment special, and the United Nations Environment Programme good business practice on climate change. However a more strategic and sustained approach on our communications is a sustained priority for the coming year, once the communications team restructuring is in place, especially around raising the profile of what the Agency and region are doing around the low carbon agenda.

6.5 We are continuing our leadership role in hosting a range of co-located organisations that can support business, such as Envirowise, Carbon Trust, and the Waste Resources Action programme. Some of this close working is already paying off for the region, for example we have secured, through Envirowise, over half of the national funding for resource efficiency business clubs. With the sub-national result this is an area we would like to explore more.

## **7. Health**

7.1 We have had discussions with the Department of Health on how to measure our contribution to healthy life expectancy that our investments make, through

improved economic, social and environmental outcomes, but this work is dependant on them securing resources.

## **8. Our Approach**

- 8.1 The Agency's aim is to mainstream sustainable development. Over the year we have developed a small unit to support the Head of Sustainable Development, this has include a Waste Policy Manager, and secondments to cover areas such as construction and energy policy, to be replaced by permanent posts by the end of the financial year. This helps address one of our corporate risks around capacity in this area.
- 8.2 Also the Corporate Director for Economic Regeneration who leads on sustainable development and energy has set up an agency wide task and finish group supported by an internal secondment to ensure the responsibility for delivery of the SD policy and action plan is delivered across the Agency, and is ensuring more rapid progress will be made on our internal environmental management system.

**For more information including SD policy and action plan** - See link to SD page on AWM website

<http://www.advantagewm.co.uk/what-we-do/improving-places/sustainability-and-the-environment.aspx>

ENDS