

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Draft Structural Reform Plan

16th July 2010

Structural Reform Plans

Structural Reform Plans are the key tool of the Coalition Government for making departments accountable for the implementation of the reforms set out in the Coalition Agreement. They replace the old, top-down systems of targets and central micromanagement.

The reforms set out in each department's SRP are designed to turn government on its head, taking power away from Whitehall and putting it into the hands of people and communities. Once these reforms are in place, people themselves will have the power to improve our country and our public services, through the mechanisms of local democratic accountability, competition, choice, and social action.

The reform plans set out in this document are consistent with and form part of the Department's contribution to the Spending Review. All departmental spending is subject to the Spending Review.

We have adopted a cautious view of the timescales for delivering all legislative measures due to the unpredictability of pressures on Parliamentary time.

Foreword by the Secretary of State

I am delighted to publish the Department's Structural Reform Plan. This is an important opportunity for us to set out our commitments to reform, and when we will implement them.

At the heart of this Department's business and this Structural Reform Plan is our commitment to make this the greenest government ever. Our work in Defra supports the ambitious programme for government set out by the Coalition, and supports its top priorities.

In doing this, we work in partnership with local communities, civil society, members of the public and businesses, contributing to the Big Society. The Government cannot tackle these issues on its own. Its role is to intervene only when needed, respecting the individual's contribution. Civil society and local authorities play an important role in bringing people together in local communities to work towards common goals and solutions. People need to be supported in making decisions that will promote their own quality of life, taking responsibility for their environment.

At Defra, we help to strengthen the economy and tackle the deficit. The environment is a crucial component of economic growth, and we work to ensure it is managed sustainably. We support green growth by driving the development of new green products and services, creating new market and business opportunities, stimulating the creation of jobs, and promoting the efficient use of resources by businesses and consumers.

Many of these issues are international in nature, and we will continue to work with other EU countries and international partners. We will also work with and through our network and local authorities, and ensure that decisions are based on sound science and evidence. We will listen to your views and revise the plan following consultation. We will then publish it as a final commitment alongside our agreed budgets in the autumn Spending Review.

Caroline Spelman, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Departmental Priorities

- 1. Support and develop British farming and encourage sustainable food production**
 - Help to enhance the competitiveness and resilience of the whole food chain, including farms and the fish industry, to ensure a secure, environmentally sustainable and healthy supply of food with improved standards of animal welfare

- 2. Help to enhance the environment and biodiversity to improve quality of life**
 - Enhance and protect the natural environment, including biodiversity and the marine environment, by reducing pollution and preventing habitat loss and degradation

- 3. Support a strong and sustainable green economy, resilient to climate change**
 - Encourage businesses, people and communities to manage and use natural resources in a sustainable manner and to reduce waste; and work to ensure that the UK economy is resilient to climate change

2. Help to enhance the environment and biodiversity to improve quality of life (1 / 2)

Enhance and protect the natural environment, including biodiversity and the marine environment, by reducing pollution and preventing habitat loss and degradation

ACTIONS	Start	End
2.1 Support the building of the Big Society to enhance the countryside, habitats and urban environment		
i. Review the governance arrangements of National Parks	Jul 2010	Dec 2010
ii. Publish proposals to increase the accountability of National Parks	Jan 2011	
iii. Create a new designation with CLG to protect green areas of particular importance to local communities, modelled on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)	Jul 2010	Dec 2012
iv. Launch national campaign to increase tree-planting by the private sector and civil society	Dec 2010	
2.2 Help communities and wildlife adapt to climate change		
i. Implement the findings of the Pitt Review to improve our flood defences and prevent unnecessary buildings in areas of high flood risk	Jun 2010	May 2015
ii. Assess the scope for actions to offset the impact of development on biodiversity	Jul 2010	Apr 2011
iii. Publish a Natural Environment White Paper, setting out measures to protect wildlife and promote green spaces and wildlife corridors	Apr 2011	
2.3 Spearhead international progress on conservation and endangered species		
i. Agree Marine Policy Statement and publish first draft cut of Marine Conservation Zones	Jul 2010	Apr 2011
MILESTONES		
A. Campaign to increase tree-planting launched	Dec 2010	
B. Proposals to increase accountability of National Parks published	Jan 2011	
C. Natural Environment White Paper published	Apr 2011	

3. Support a strong and sustainable green economy, resilient to climate change (1 / 2)

Create the conditions in which businesses can innovate, invest and grow; encourage businesses, people and communities to manage and use natural resources in a sustainable manner and to reduce waste; and work to ensure that the UK economy is resilient to climate change

ACTIONS	Start	End
3.1 Drive a 'zero waste' agenda		
i. Agree goals for 2014/2020 and set the path towards a 'zero waste' economy through review of waste policies	Jun 2010	Apr 2011
ii. Explore voluntary responsibility deal on waste among businesses	Jul 2010	Apr 2011
iii. Repeal Climate Change Act powers for household charging	Jul 2010	Nov 2011
iv. Set out steps to promote increased energy from waste through anaerobic digestion	Nov 2010	
3.2 Reform the water industry to enhance competition and improve conservation		
i. Publish a White Paper on reform of the water industry to ensure more efficient use of water and to protect poorer households	Jun 2011	
ii. Put required legislation in place	Nov 2011	Nov 2012
3.3 Drive sustainable public sector practice across government		
i. Review current targets on waste reduction in government buildings	Jul 2010	Nov 2010
ii. Decide whether to set new targets on waste reduction in government buildings	Dec 2010	
iii. Publish action plan with DECC and Cabinet Office to ensure government operations and procurement are the greenest ever	Oct 2010	
iv. Publish Government Buying Standards for transport, food, furniture, textiles, gardening services, water-using products and cleaning products and services	Mar 2011	
MILESTONES		
A. Action plan on green government operations published	Oct 2010	
B. Waste strategy published, including goals on waste	Apr 2011	
C. Government Buying Standards published	Mar 2011	
D. Water White Paper published	Jun 2011	
E. Climate Change Act powers for household charging repealed	Nov 2011	

