

“green alliance...”



**Setting the Agenda: Environmental Leadership for
the UK Presidency of the EU**

**Scoping Paper
June 2004**

Contents

Contents	2
Foreword.....	3
The UK Presidency of the EU	4
KEY ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES	7
Tackling Climate Change	7
Chemicals and Pesticides.....	8
Sustainable Consumption and Production	11
Water.....	13
Biodiversity.....	14
Fisheries	16
Sustainable Agriculture.....	18
Environment and Health	19
MAKING EU ENVIRONMENT POLICY MORE EFFECTIVE	21
The EU Sustainable Development Strategy, Integration and Cardiff.....	21
Better Regulation and Implementation	23
Investing in the Environment.....	25
Conclusions – Influencing the Environmental Agenda of the UK Presidency.....	28
Glossary	29
Annex I: Selected Dossiers Likely to be ‘Live’ During the UK Presidency	30
Annex 2: Key Dates 2004/05	31

Foreword

The UK will hold the Presidency of the EU Council of Ministers from 1 July - 31 December 2005. The Presidency currently rotates every six months between Member States. Holding the office requires, amongst other things, presiding over all meetings of the Council and its constituent working groups during this period. This provides an opportunity to set the agenda for the EU, and move forward on issues that the UK would like EU Environment Ministers to pursue. The UK has the opportunity to focus decisions that deliver ambitious, well-targeted and effective environmental goals during the Presidency.

In preparation, Defra is seeking input from a range of stakeholders in deciding what these goals should be, and has commissioned Green Alliance and IEEP to organise this by means of a seminar, which will take place on 30 June 2004. This report provides some background information to assist stakeholders in reviewing the EU agenda and preparing for the seminar. It presents the policy context, explains the role of the Presidency, and proposes some ideas for discussion and debate, mainly drawn from stakeholders themselves. Its aim is to inform participants and stimulate thinking in advance of the seminar.

Green Alliance and IEEP would like to thank DEFRA for commissioning this project, but must emphasise that DEFRA is not responsible for any of the views expressed in this paper. We would also like to thank the authors of the paper from IEEP: Catherine Bowyer; David Baldock; Claire Monkhouse; and David Wilkinson; and other colleagues within and outside the Institute who gave their valuable inputs to the paper.

For more information on the seminar contact Caroline Read at the Green Alliance: cread@green-alliance.org.uk

The UK Presidency of the EU

The UK will hold the Presidency of the EU for the second half of 2005. The Presidency currently rotates every six months between Member States, and holding the office requires three main tasks:

- (i) Presiding over all meetings of the Council and its constituent working groups;
- (ii) Representing the Council in its dealings with the other Institutions and Bodies of the EU, and;
- (iii) Representing the EU in relations with countries outside the EU such as at the United Nations and World Trade Organisation.

There are limitations on what can be achieved because of ongoing business and the relatively short time available, particularly with the Presidency being reduced by the summer break. Nevertheless it presents an opportunity to advance some new issues and inject new life into existing processes and policy debates.

At the same time the UK will also hold the chair of the G8, the grouping of some of the world's leading economies, throughout 2005. Originally set up as a forum for economic and trade matters, the group's agenda has been broadened to include issues of significance to sustainability, such as development. This role, together with the international responsibilities of the EU Presidency, could provide the opportunity to highlight issues of global concern, such as advancing commitments made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, the Doha Development Agenda and the Millennium Development Goals, to ensure due attention is provided for the environment. The Prime Minister has indicated that climate change and Africa will be the UK's G8 priorities.

The Inherited Agenda and Political Climate

In setting the UK's agenda, it needs to be acknowledged that the overwhelming majority of any Presidency's 'business' is inherited. This includes ongoing processes, policy debates, draft legislation and taking forward strategic commitments, such as the Sixth Environment Action Programme (6EAP) and the EU Sustainable Development Strategy. Initiatives spearheaded by the preceding Presidencies – the Netherlands and Luxembourg - will undoubtedly continue through the UK's term. Unforeseen events and issues will also have an impact.

<p>The Dutch Presidency has recently announced that its environmental focus will be on the REACH chemicals proposal, climate change, energy, maritime transport and the environment as an opportunity for economic development. On strategic matters, it aims to press forward with the economic, social and environmental reforms of the Lisbon Strategy and negotiations on the EU's post-2006 Financial Perspective. Depending on progress, it is hoped that the latter can be adopted under the Luxembourg Presidency, although it may well fall to the UK to finalise the discussions.</p>

There is always some element of uncertainty as to exactly what will be on a Presidency agenda, particularly when looking more than a year ahead. This has never

been truer than at present. Institutional changes in 2004 – enlargement to 25 Member States in May, a new Commission in November, and the debate on the new Constitutional Treaty – have resulted in a slower policy process, and more caution in agreeing new legislation. More strategic matters rather than new Directives are being discussed. The economic and political climate is also having an impact. A slowdown in economic growth in much of the EU and globally means that there is a growing emphasis on switching attention away from the environment to ‘sustainable growth’. Politically, there is more questioning of environmental priorities. A challenge for the UK Presidency will be to ensure that past sustainable development achievements are not lost, and that new and ongoing developments are not sidelined. The UK also has the opportunity to play an active role in the next stage of EU enlargement, by facilitating dialogue with new members and engaging with those Candidate Countries due to join the EU in the future.

Despite uncertainty about exactly what will be on the agenda, however, there are a number of key policy developments that are likely to fall within the UK’s six month tenure, including:

- potential conclusion of the post 2006 EU budget (if not agreed under the Luxembourg Presidency);
- actions following the reviews of the Lisbon process and the Sustainable Development Strategy;
- taking forward some key Thematic Strategies under the Sixth EAP;
- discussions on CAP ‘second pillar’ funding;
- negotiations on REACH chemicals policy;
- environmental review of the Common Fisheries Policy; and
- referenda on the EU Constitution.

A more comprehensive list of likely policy milestones during this period can be found in Annexes I and II.

Adding Value to the Inherited Agenda

Given the inherited agenda, the UK needs to focus on where it can add value and set goals that are realistic and well targeted. During its 1998 Presidency, for example, the UK spearheaded the Cardiff process on integrating the environment into EU sectoral policy. The UK needs to decide what the focus of the 2005 Presidency will be. Stakeholder dialogue is an important contribution to this discussion.

Preparations for the Presidency are already underway, and DEFRA has indicated that the following may be issues to focus attention on:

- climate change as the major priority;
- sustainable consumption and production;
- environmental technologies;
- the inclusion of intra-EU air services in the EU emissions trading scheme; and
- better regulation and impact assessment.

Do you agree with these objectives? If not, what would you like to see the UK prioritise during 2005?

KEY ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

Tackling Climate Change

Climate Change, is ‘one of the greatest environmental and economic threats facing the planet’¹ and a top policy priority for the EU. It is now accepted that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions generated by human activities are having an impact on the globe’s climate with potentially devastating consequences, and that action must be taken.

Where are we now?

Climate change is an international problem and the EU has been central to the promotion of multilateral action. Currently the main policy instrument of importance internationally is the Kyoto Protocol. In order to enter into force 55 parties - including enough industrialised countries to account for 55 per cent of industrial greenhouse gas emissions - must have ratified it. This threshold has yet to be met, although it is hoped that Russia will ratify imminently, thereby allowing the Protocol to enter into force.

At the EU level a key guiding policy vehicle is the 2000 European Climate Change Programme (ECCP). The ECCP is the origin of a raft of recently adopted policies relating to energy efficiency, transport and industry, which aim to help the EU meet its targets under Kyoto. In addition, a Directive establishing an EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS) was adopted in October 2003. The Directive provides for an initial trading period beginning in January 2005 and a second from 2008 to 2012.

What are the main challenges?

When the UK’s Presidency commences many of the EU measures on climate change will still be relatively new, with the EU ETS only having been running for six months. Therefore, it is likely that it will be too early for effective evaluation of individual policies, but it may be possible to assess the transposition of policies. It is vital that complacency does not set in, as Member State implementation and transposition will be key to ensuring that Kyoto, EU and national targets are met. A full overview assessment of whether measures currently in place will allow targets to be met and how to fill gaps effectively would also be useful.

***‘To meet current obligations and future targets for cutting greenhouse gases, increases in transport emissions must be tackled, energy use must change and renewable energy sources such as wind and solar power must be promoted’.
(Coalition of environmental NGOs, May 2004)***

¹ European Commission DG Environment

Air and maritime transport, together with household energy consumption, were highlighted in the last review of the ECCP as two major legislative gaps. The UK has already stated, in its Air Transport White Paper, that it intends to press for the inclusion of intra-EU air services in the EU ETS from 2008. This is one issue that has been highlighted as a priority for the UK during the EU Presidency.

The post 2012 EU agenda and the second phase of emissions allocations under the EU ETS (2008 to 2012 commitments) are also major issues to be addressed. The European Commission is hoping to launch targets in 2005 for post 2012. These targets and the emissions allocations for the second phase of trading will need to be more stringent. This may lead to problems if Kyoto has not entered into force and other non-EU nations are not seen to make serious commitments to reduce emissions. One of the main challenges is therefore to maintain political will and support for action at EU and Member State levels, particularly if international efforts are flagging. In the event that Kyoto does enter into force it will also be important to maintain the EU's international leadership in this field and to push the agenda forward, even though 2005 will be too early to consider the specifics of Kyoto commitments post 2012.

What should the UK aim to achieve?

- Would inclusion of intra-EU aviation in the EU ETS be enough? What other options could be pursued?
- How can the UK exploit its central role in the EU and G8 to move the climate change agenda forward?
- How can the UK assist in maintaining support for action from politicians, industry and the public? In its energy White Paper the UK sets stringent targets for emission reductions. Should it encourage other Member States to do the same?
- Should the UK encourage the development of a formal monitoring system or encourage work on gaps and the ability to meet targets?
- Should the UK seek to open discussions on possible approaches beyond 2012?

Chemicals and Pesticides

The production, use and disposal of chemicals and of products containing hazardous substances has been linked to a wide range of environmental and health impacts. Reproductive disorders observed in bird and animal species have been associated with exposure to dangerous chemicals, and research on human health impacts has linked chemicals with a number of conditions, including respiratory and bladder cancers, leukaemia, mesothelioma, skin and eye disorders, respiratory diseases and others. Whilst there are some well-known causal relationships, for others the links are less clear and gaps in information make them difficult to establish.

Existing legislation does not fully address these concerns and increasingly will be unable to meet expectations in the future. The most startling gap is that there is insufficient information available about the properties of more than 100,000 'existing' substances, ie those placed on the market before 1981, representing over 99 percent of the total volume of substances on the market today.

In the Sixth EAP there is a commitment that by 2020 chemicals should be produced and used only in ways that do not lead to a significant negative impact on the environment and human health, and chemicals that are dangerous should be substituted by safer alternatives.

Where are we now?

The drive for a new chemicals policy was initiated in the UK Presidency in 1998. Work has been ongoing since then and in October 2003 the Commission released a proposal to overhaul the existing regime. The Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals proposed Regulation (REACH) aims to ensure that manufacturers, importers and downstream users make information available about the properties of chemicals placed on the market, and assess risks of their use. REACH includes a strict regime for testing, risk assessment and management, and provides for the creation of a European Chemicals Agency for registration, evaluation and data sharing. The ‘burden of proof’ will shift from public authorities to industry. Currently authorities need to prove that a chemical substance is unsafe before imposing restrictions, whereas under REACH industry will have to prove that the chemical can be used safely, and how, before it is placed on the market. In addition, efforts are being made to reduce the need for animal testing, including requirements to share data on testing.

‘The chemical industry supports the political objectives of the White Paper. However, implementation of REACH in its current form will create a bureaucratic, costly and inefficient system. Successful implementation of REACH depends upon resolving crucial workability issues.’ (CEFIC, June 2004)

The proposal has been the subject of intense discussion and negotiation with health and environmental concerns balanced against the need to maintain the competitiveness of the European chemicals industry, which accounts for 8 per cent of EU manufacturing production and is one of the EU’s most competitive and successful industries.

‘The draft legislation published by the European Commission in October 2003 must be strengthened by MEPs and the Council of Ministers. [They should] ensure that the final Regulation includes the strongest possible position on substitution of the most hazardous chemicals. The use of chemicals of very high concern should only be authorised with effective measures to minimise exposure, when there is an overwhelming societal need and no safer alternative’. (Coalition of UK environmental NGOs, May 2004)

Unlike many other chemicals, pesticides are only authorised if they have been individually evaluated and if their authorised use will not lead to unacceptable effects on health or on the environment. However, the EU aims to move towards more sustainable use of pesticides and to substitute those that are persistent, bio-

accumulative or toxic for less dangerous alternatives. This is being advanced through the forthcoming **Thematic Strategy on Pesticides**. The Strategy seeks to establish better research, monitoring and reporting systems; improve controls on the use and distribution of pesticides; and amend the Registration Directive. Good practice and reduced use is also to be encouraged, by mechanisms such as the cross compliance provisions arising from the recent CAP reform.

The Commission is also developing a Mercury Strategy, and there is ongoing work on dioxins, PCBs and endocrine disruptors.

What are the main challenges?

There is some uncertainty about how much progress will be made on the REACH proposal before the UK Presidency, and at what stage in the decision-making process the proposal will be in July 2005. Nevertheless, it is certain that the UK will need to work on the dossier, whether this is reaching a Common Position in the Council of Ministers, or finalising what will be extremely contentious negotiations.

‘European governments have a once in a lifetime opportunity to ensure a safer future for people and wildlife by putting in place a robust new Chemical law’.
(WWF Detox campaign)

Negotiations on REACH will continue to be one of the most controversial items on the agenda in 2005. The Commission is carrying out further impact assessments. Some Member States, including the UK, are active in putting forward alternatives to the proposed system, and there continues to be intense lobbying from industry groups, environmental NGOs and others.

Agreeing a new chemicals regime that is workable and cost effective, whilst ensuring protection of the environment and human health, will be a major challenge. In addition, balancing the economic, social and environmental impacts, and ensuring that stakeholder concerns are addressed, are essential to achieving the best outcome.

What should the UK aim to achieve?

- The UK needs to ensure that the regime adopted is workable and cost effective, whilst maintaining its objectives of protecting human health and the environment and not compromising the competitiveness of the chemicals industry.
- How can the UK help industry prepare for new requirements under REACH? For example, the use of voluntary measures before requirements enter into force, pilot schemes, etc.
- The UK has put forward fundamental changes to the draft Regulation, based on ‘one substance, one registration’ through compulsory consortia. This would substantially reduce the number of substances that need to be registered, therefore lifting the burden on industry and minimising animal testing. Should this approach be taken forward?

- The Dutch have proposed setting out additional criteria for the prioritisation of high-risk substances with longer time frames for others. Is this something the UK should support?
- How can requirements in REACH provide for a reduction in animal testing?
- There is a conflict between industry confidentiality and the need to share information. How can these principles be reconciled?

Sustainable Consumption and Production

As world economies continue to grow and standards of living rise, the demand for goods and services increases. Resource use has environmental impacts from the beginning of a product's life cycle, eg mineral extraction, during production, through its use phase, and at the end of its life when it becomes waste. There is a need to ensure that environmental degradation does not increase with continued economic expansion.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002) called for developed countries to take the lead on meeting this challenge and 'encourage the development of a ten year framework of programmes to accelerate the shift towards sustainable patterns of consumption and production'.

Where are we now?

One of the four aims of the Sixth Environment Action Programme is *'better resource efficiency and resource and waste management to bring about more sustainable production and consumption patterns, thereby decoupling the use of resources and the generation of waste from the rate of economic growth, and aiming to ensure that the consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources does not exceed the carrying capacity of the environment'* (Art 2).

To meet this aim the EU relies on a raft of legislation covering waste management, pollution control and broader strategies for future policy. Thinking on sustainable production and consumption is still at a relatively early stage.

The 'Thematic Strategies', due to be launched in July 2005, will set an ambitious framework for policy on natural resources and waste for many years. They need both to clarify directions and to give rise to practical measures to deliver real results.

The **Thematic Strategy on the Sustainable Use of Natural Resources** for 2005-2030 has the overall objective of reducing the environmental impact of resource use on the environment, and decoupling economic growth and environmental damage. Elements include knowledge gathering, policy assessment, and policy integration. The Strategy is part of the EU response to the WSSD commitment on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP).

The **Thematic Strategy on the Prevention and Recycling of Waste** will guide the development of waste policy until 2012. Some of the key issues are setting targets for prevention and recycling; moving to a materials approach to recycling targets; and

whether targets should be set at a Community level rather than being set for each Member State.

A key mechanism for delivering these strategies is **Integrated Product Policy (IPP)**. Its aim is to reduce the environmental impacts from products throughout their lifecycle. It will supplement existing product-related policies by providing a wider lifecycle framework; and most importantly, strengthen the coordination and coherence between existing and future environment-related product policy instruments.

The recently adopted **Environmental Technologies Action Plan (ETAP)** focuses primarily on soft measures and cooperation. It aims to harness the full potential of environmental technologies by removing existing obstacles to their development and uptake, ensuring the EU takes a leading role and mobilises all stakeholders in supporting the objectives, with the ultimate goal to reduce pressure on natural resources and stimulate economic growth.

A **Thematic Strategy on Soil** is also due to be adopted in 2005. The Strategy will look at how best to strengthen the policy framework relating to the protection of soil. Issues covered include: erosion; soil degradation due to contamination, loss of nutrients and structure; loss of soils through sealing; how soils can be effectively monitored; and the identification of knowledge gaps and how to address them.

What are the main challenges?

- Breaking the link between economic growth and environmental degradation and resource use by developing more sustainable patterns of consumption and production.
- More rapid exploitation of clean technologies and effective support for Europe's green industries.
- Improved management of waste and effective compliance with existing legislation.
- Raising consumer awareness and engaging them more strongly in confronting sustainability issues.
- Ensuring that externalities and resource constraints are better reflected in market prices.

'There is a need to drive forward the development of an EU sustainable consumption strategy and deliver an ambitious strategy with clear targets and timetables which are acted upon at the Member State and EU level' (Coalition of UK environmental NGOs, May 2004)

What should the UK aim to achieve?

- The EU's Lisbon objective is to achieve annual GDP growth of 3 percent per annum. How can this be reconciled with a need to reduce Europe's impact on the environment?

- To date the EU has produced little in response to the Johannesburg commitment to develop a ten-year framework of programmes on SCP. The UK has, however, begun a debate on this topic, particularly through publication of *‘Changing Patterns – the UK Government Framework for SCP’*. Should SCP be seen as a key issue for the Presidency? It cuts across all three pillars of sustainable development, and has an international dimension, thus linking with the UK Presidency of the G8 at this time.
- How could the Presidency translate the commitment to SCP to more concrete measures and initiatives at the EU level?
- How can ETAP be given strong momentum during the UK Presidency to deliver an ambitious programme of action at the EU level?
- How should the Presidency take forward the two key Thematic Strategies on resources during 2005?
- How should the Presidency take forward the soil protection Thematic Strategy? Is there a need for further legislative measures in this area? (Directives on soil monitoring, sewage sludge and composting are already expected).

Water

Water resources remain a high profile area for environmental protection in the EU. This is driven not only by work on the implementation of the water framework Directive and other legislation, but also concern over issues such as flood management.

Where are we now?

Achieving high levels of quality for ground and surface waters remains a priority. Full implementation of the water framework Directive (WFD), requires all waters to meet ‘good status’ by 2015. Work on implementing the WFD will be ongoing throughout the next decade, and there are a number of binding dates for Member States to meet, such as having operational monitoring programmes (Dec 2006) and publishing River Basin Management Plans (Dec 2009).

Furthermore, the Commission has proposed revisions to the Directives on bathing water and groundwater. Depending on how quickly progress is made on these initiatives, both could be agreed during the UK Presidency. There may also be further work on priority substances, for example a proposed Directive, before the start of the UK Presidency. In addition, the Commission is likely to propose a Directive on flood management. The UK currently views such a Directive as unnecessary.

What are the main challenges?

The main challenge is implementing the WFD. The UK is working closely with other Member States on this issue through the Common Implementation Strategy. It is likely that progress on groundwater and bathing waters will be in their latter stages. Thus political management of these stages will be an important requirement of the Presidency. However, legislative work (in whatever form) on priority substances and

flood management would be in their early stages, so the UK would be in a position to influence the early debate in Council.

There is a need to 'promote the correct implementation of the water framework Directive, and support a robust new groundwater Directive that provides long term protection for drinking water quality and groundwater dependent ecosystems based on the prevention of pollution rather than treatment (Coalition of UK environmental NGOs, May 2004)

What should the UK aim to achieve?

- Ensuring that the final agreements on the groundwater and bathing water proposals offer full environmental protection in a cost-effective manner.
- To ensure that the particular interests of the UK are taken into account in the early development of proposals on priority substances and flood management, including their full integration and compatibility with the management requirements of legislation such as the WFD and IPPC, as well as with the principles upon which this legislation is based.

Biodiversity

According to DG Environment, 42 percent of Europe's native mammals, 15 percent of its birds, 45 percent of its butterflies and 45 percent of its reptiles are under threat. Decline in biodiversity is a consequence of intensification of agriculture, industrial pollution, unsustainable fishing, climate change and deposition of air pollutants.

Where are we now?

In the EU, efforts are being made to halt the decline in biodiversity by 2010 – a target agreed at the Göteborg European Council and set out as a priority in the EU SDS. World leaders subsequently agreed at the 2002 WSSD to significantly reduce global biodiversity loss by 2010. Meeting the 2010 target poses the biggest challenge for nature conservation in the next five years.

Currently, there are two main strands to EU biodiversity policy: the establishment of a protected area network (Natura 2000) and the integration of nature conservation into other policy areas, such as agriculture, fisheries and industry. The Natura 2000 network is made up of protected sites designated under the 1992 habitats Directive and the 1979 birds Directive. It covers both terrestrial and marine habitats. The timetable for setting up Natura 2000 has slipped significantly since the Directive's adoption, and its completion is still some years off. Adequate funding is vital to ensure that designated sites are effectively maintained. This is important given the new EU budget from 2007 and potential changes to structural, regional development and other funds (especially LIFE).

Towards 2010 – The Message from Malahide

In May 2004 the Irish Presidency and the European Commission jointly hosted the conference, '*Biodiversity and the EU – Sustaining Life, Sustaining Livelihoods*' in Malahide. The conference brought together over 200 participants from EU Member States, civil society, NGOs and environmental agencies, and focused on a number of issues of relevance to biodiversity, including: fisheries; agriculture; forestry; sustainable use of natural resources; regional policy and spatial planning; energy and transport construction; tourism; international trade; economic and development cooperation; research, monitoring and indicators; education, training, awareness and participation; and international governance.

The Conference adopted a '*Message from Malahide*', identifying 18 objectives and related targets which could form the basis for future priority action to reach the EU target of halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010.

The Irish Presidency is to develop conclusions for adoption by the Environment Council at its meeting on 28 June 2004, addressing, *inter alia*, the completion of the review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and matters arising from Malahide. It is intended that these will give a new focus and prioritisation to implementing the Strategy, and to achieving the 2010 target in the time remaining.

Efforts have begun to reduce environmental impacts. The mid term review of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the renewal of the Common Fisheries Policy are examples of this. The CAP could potentially be used to reduce biodiversity decline. However, the tools available such as cross compliance will need to be used effectively. In relation to fisheries and marine policy, recovery and management plans are a step in the right direction. There is an active debate as to whether and how fishing should be limited within protected marine sites. In the meantime, EU measures have been agreed to protect the Darwin Mounds – a potential SAC site – from the impact of damaging fishing activities, and proposals to protect other coral reef areas in Community waters are under discussion.

Several of the Thematic Strategies will have a bearing on future EU biodiversity policy. The marine protection, pesticides and soil strategies are of particular importance. GMO regulation will also potentially impact on biodiversity. In the last two years, the EU has been addressing many aspects of the application, cultivation and marketing of GMOs, producing a series of measures concerned with the authorisation of new products, the acceptable level of contamination of non GMO seeds, the labelling of food and feed containing GMOs, etc. There are strongly divided views within the EU on the merits of authorising new GMOs for commercial use.

What are the main challenges?

- It is important that the needs of Natura 2000 are appropriately considered in the review of EU funding instruments. Moreover, it is essential that funds, especially those linked to rural development, are effectively used. In this context, there might

be scope for exchange of good practice: the UK's experience of the rural development fund could be of wider interest.

- Pressure and political will must be maintained to ensure that the designation process for both marine and terrestrial sites is completed as soon as possible. Offshore marine sites is a category where there are currently serious gaps. Effective management of protected sites, the development of appropriate guidance and the sharing of best practice are all essential in relation to marine site designation and overall site management.
- Implementation and enforcement of current legislation is key in relation to biodiversity conservation. Identifying and closing knowledge gaps, effective reporting and monitoring are central to better implementation and informed decision making. The monitoring of biodiversity remains ineffective.
- There is a need to look beyond 2010 and in particular to maintain political commitment for 2010. The effective implementation of integration policies and Natura 2000 is essential. However, it is probable that even with this, further action will be necessary in order to halt loss of biodiversity. As regards GMOs, one key concern remains the regulation of co-existence of genetically modified and conventional crops, not least those that are organically produced.

What should the UK aim to achieve?

- How should the UK work to encourage better implementation and improve information provision?
- Should the UK look at how Member States can best use EU funding to ensure that there is adequate money available for nature conservation?
- Should the UK look at how new sectoral policies can best be used to enhance nature conservation eg best practice sharing in relation to cross compliance?
- Should the UK promote the discussion on co-existence, with a view to resolving the 'legislative gap'? How best could the UK share/build on lessons learnt and knowledge gained from the field trials?
- Is there a need for new initiatives, such as an EU measure on the control of invasive alien species?

Fisheries

Many aspects of fisheries, whether of hunted wild stocks or fish farming, are environmentally sensitive and politically charged. The decline in EU fish stocks is a cause of serious concern in itself, while there is a wider EU fisheries 'footprint' from an increasing volume of imports and fishing in non-EU waters to meet the widening supply gap. Overfishing is integrally linked to sustainable development, and includes issues covering the exploitation of resources, decline in species and habitats, employment and social structures. This range of inter-linkages means that measures in relation to fishing, including the role of the Common Fisheries Policy, can be controversial. Fish farming is also an area of EU competence with a variety of discrete environmental impacts, such as chemical and biological pollution, degradation of habitats and dependence on wild stocks for feed.

Where are we now?

European fisheries management is largely dealt with at Community level. The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) provides the framework for EU and Member State activities. In December 2002 the CFP was renewed and now contains provisions for the application of the precautionary principle and an ecosystem-based approach to management. An environmental review of the CFP is expected in 2005.

Since the end of 2002 a number of legislative measures have been agreed. Stock recovery plans have been adopted for cod and northern hake, with two additional proposals having been developed for sole, southern hake and Norwegian lobster. Another important Decision provides for the establishment of Regional Advisory Councils with the intention of increasing stakeholder involvement in fisheries policy.

There is a dedicated source of funding for fisheries, the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG), which is being reviewed along with the other Structural Funds. There are also important links between fisheries and nature conservation measures, especially in relation to Natura 2000 marine sites.

At an international level the EU has numerous bi- and multilateral agreements regarding fishing rights. In relation to fish stocks, the EU has signed up to the WSSD 2015 stock recovery target.

What are the main challenges?

A major challenge is ensuring that the revised CFP delivers on its promise of improving environmental sustainability. Whilst a number of measures have already been agreed, for example the use of Regional Advisory Councils to, *inter alia*, promote biodiversity awareness, there are numerous other means that could be employed in order to achieve this, including:

- command and control measures eg more stringent technical measures and increased enforcement;
- the application of environmental impact assessment techniques to fisheries management;
- ensuring that stock recovery and management plans are rolled out across all stocks fished by the EU, developing measures to deal with the most damaging types of fishing;
- increased use of financial incentives, such as FIFG, to promote environmentally friendly activities;
- alternative economic instruments eg use of fuel tax or charging for the use of common resources ie privatising fishing rights along the lines of the emissions trading model;
- development of more environmentally friendly technologies;
- improving information and altering marketing to encourage traceability and promote environmental credentials eg based on the Marine Stewardship Council scheme model;
- ensuring linkages with other EU policies ie ensure that fishing in Natura 2000 marine sites is adequately managed; and
- reducing the EU's global footprint by including environmental considerations in partnership agreements.

The success of these measures will be dependent on their implementation. It is vital that policies are implemented and enforced effectively.

What should the UK aim to achieve?

- Are there particular initiatives in relation to improved environmental sustainability of fisheries that the UK should champion, or is there best practice it may wish to share?
- How can effective implementation be achieved? Can the UK do anything to ensure that environmental recommendations in relation to fisheries, eg from the environmental review of the CFP, are implemented?

Sustainable Agriculture

The way in which farmland is managed in Europe has great environmental significance. Many of the key policies shaping farming decisions are made at an EU level. The CAP is the most obvious example but others include policies on pesticides authorisation and residues in food, the use of GMOs, and plans to protect soils on a European scale.

Where are we now?

A major reform of the CAP was agreed in 2003, coming into effect in stages, some of the most important from January 2005. Most of the payments received by farmers directly from the CAP budget are being 'decoupled' from production –being made provided farmers meet certain conditions. Farmland must be kept in 'Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition' and a number of EU Directives concerning the environment, food safety, animal welfare and other issues must be complied with under a system of cross-compliance. As this system is being put into place the CAP will remain under pressure from other countries through the WTO Doha Development Round.

At present reforms are pencilled in over the next two to three years on the support systems for sugar, fruit and vegetables, flax and hemp, and wine, and there will be continued debate on the future of milk quotas. Further changes may be proposed before 2007, for example because of WTO negotiations, the budget debate, the review of the rural development Regulation or the views of the next Commissioner for agriculture.

Of particular environmental concern is the part of the CAP which funds rural development, agri-environment and several forestry policies – the 'second pillar'. A new policy framework and budget to come into effect by 2007 is under discussion this summer. Amongst the questions on the table are the share of the CAP budget devoted to the second pillar, the allocation between Member States (the UK gets only 3.5 percent at present) and the emphasis given to agri-environment and other green policy measures. Commission proposals are due by July 2004 but it is far from clear whether

all the issues will be resolved by the time the UK assumes the Presidency in July 2005.

What are the main challenges?

As the 2003 reform is put into practice it will become clearer how farmers will react and the environmental impacts will need to be scrutinised to determine whether further adjustments are needed. If the reform of the sugar regime has not been agreed by the end of June 2005 it will pass to the UK Presidency. A key challenge will be to accommodate development, health and environmental concerns into a sector with strong economic interests.

If a further reform of the CAP is to be attempted before 2007, this would need to be launched by the time of the UK Presidency. The future of the second pillar may still be on the table in July 2005, raising major questions about how environmental priorities can be delivered effectively within Europe in the rural development framework.

What should the UK aim to achieve?

- The UK has been a strong supporter of bringing an effective environmental dimension into the CAP and needs to ensure that progress is being made in all the key elements of the policy.
- Should the UK make the case for further CAP reform, particularly in commodities of greatest interest to developing countries?
- How should the UK work within the EU and G8 to arrive at a satisfactory outcome to the Doha Round on agriculture?
- How can the UK contribute to sufficiently resourced and environmentally sustainable rural development policy?

Environment and Health

The driver behind many EU policy initiatives is the need to protect human health and the environment. The Sixth Environment Action Programme identified environment and health one of its four objectives, with a specific aim of *'contributing to a high level of quality of life and social well being for citizens by providing an environment where the level of pollution does not give rise to harmful effects on human health and the environment, and by encouraging a sustainable urban development'*.

Where are we now?

In June 2003 the European Commission adopted the **Environment and Health Strategy**. The Strategy set out a long-term approach to environment and health issues, with the ultimate goal of developing a 'cause-effect framework' to provide the necessary information for the development of sound policy addressing the sources and impact pathways of health stressors. The Strategy is to be implemented in cycles, the

first of which is the **Environment and Health Action Plan**. Released in June 2004, this covers the period 2004-2010, and sets out actions focused around understanding the links between environmental factors and health problems, including improving information and its dissemination, filling knowledge gaps, reviewing policies and improving communication. There is an emphasis on respiratory diseases, neuro-developmental disorders, cancer and endocrine disrupting effects. An important element throughout the Action Plan is children's health, consistent with the Children's Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE), adopted at the WHO Fourth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health in Budapest (June 2004).

Air quality is recognised as an important factor in public health, particularly respiratory illnesses. Improving air quality therefore remains a priority, and the Commission is developing the **Clean Air for Europe (CAFE) Programme**. CAFE has a number of objectives, including developing, collecting and validating scientific information concerning air pollution; supporting the implementation of legislation and developing new measures; and ensuring that measures in different sectors needed to achieve air quality objectives are taken in a cost-effective manner at the relevant policy level. The Commission also intends to develop work on improving indoor air quality.

Around 80 percent of EU citizens live in towns and cities. In many cities, poor air quality, noise, heavy traffic and neglect of the built environment are common problems, leading to a lower quality of life and health problems for inhabitants. Cities also have an impact on the environment, for example through waste and the production and consumption of resources. Such issues are often addressed separately. However, the European Commission believes that more can be achieved by promoting an integrated approach that takes the specific needs of urban areas into account, and is therefore developing a **Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment** to take this forward. The Strategy will focus on sustainable transport, urban management and sustainable construction and design. The Commission proposes to explore ways to improve implementation of existing environmental policy in urban areas, and Member States may be encouraged to adopt national or regional urban strategies.

What are the main challenges?

- Achieving better understanding of the complex interactions between health and the environment remains a major challenge for policy makers. Information used to inform legislation needs to be reliable, scientifically sound and accessible. In the absence of 'perfect' information, how should the precautionary principle be applied to these issues?
- Ensuring that there is a joined-up thinking in urban policy will present Member States with a major challenge. A range of stakeholders will need to be involved in the process, and existing approaches may need to be analysed to ensure consistency.

What should the UK aim to achieve?

- How can the UK ensure that the Environment and Health Action Plan results in improved information on the interactions between health and the environment? Should actions be taken at a local, national, EU or international level? Does research need to be better coordinated?
- How can existing legislation on air quality be better implemented? What are the main barriers and how can these be addressed?
- Where does air quality policy need to be strengthened?
- How can urban policy be approached in an integrated manner?
- Should the EU set requirements for urban planning, or is this something individual Member States should retain competency over? If so, what other means are there to facilitate cooperation on urban policy?
- The UK has a wealth of experience in urban planning. Are there any lessons that it can share with other Member States?

MAKING EU ENVIRONMENT POLICY MORE EFFECTIVE

The EU Sustainable Development Strategy, integration and Cardiff

Over the past decade, the emphasis of the EU's environmental policy has been shifting away from the use of legislation to control pollution from point sources, towards tackling some of the underlying causes (or 'drivers') of environmental damage, particularly in key economic sectors like agriculture, transport or energy. That is why Article 6 of the EU Treaty states that: *Environmental protection requirements must be integrated into the definition and implementation of the Community policies and activities...in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.*

However, what this means is that environmental policy is no longer the exclusive responsibility of EU Environment Ministers alone, nor the Commission's Directorate-General for the Environment. Instead, responsibility for advancing environmental protection and sustainable development now has to be shared with other sectoral Ministers and stakeholders, and with various levels of government. This raises the twin challenge of how to develop a new culture of more coherent, 'joined-up' policy making, while at the same time ensuring that essential long-term environmental objectives are not sacrificed to the short-term demands of specific economic sectors.

Where are we now?

Several overlapping initiatives have been developed to give substance to Article 6.

- During its last Presidency, the UK launched what has become known as the ‘**Cardiff Process**’. In Cardiff in June 1998, EU Heads of Government called upon all formations of the Council of Ministers to develop their own strategies for integrating the environment and sustainable development into their activities; to monitor and evaluate their success; and to report regularly on progress to meetings of the European Council. Nine Councils have so far responded. Progress was reviewed recently.
- In June 2001, EU Heads of Government meeting in Gothenburg launched the **EU’s Sustainable Development Strategy** (EU SDS). This focused on the challenges of climate change; transport; public health; and the management of natural resources. The Gothenburg summit also called for the introduction of a system of sustainability impact assessment for all major Commission proposals, taking full account of all likely economic, social and environmental impacts, both inside and outside the Union.
- With the launch of the EU SDS, an environmental dimension was added to the so-called ‘**Lisbon Strategy**’. This is a high-level, ten-year initiative focused on economic and employment reforms aimed at making the EU the most competitive, knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010, thereby securing better jobs and greater social cohesion.
- Under the **Sixth Environment Action Programme** (6EAP), seven ‘Thematic Strategies’ are being developed by DG Environment in partnership with other relevant Commission DGs and stakeholders. The strategies cover: soils; pesticides; the marine environment; prevention and recycling of waste; the management of natural resources; the urban environment; and air quality.

What are the main challenges?

Despite these ambitious initiatives, over the past few years the drive to put the environment at the heart of all EU policies has flagged. The Cardiff process has been too dependent on the (variable) commitment of individual Presidencies. Deadlines for the review of a number of the Cardiff strategies have been missed, and there has been little response so far from Councils to establishing sector-specific ‘decoupling’ targets. Meanwhile, the EU SDS has been overshadowed by the priority the Lisbon process gives to safeguarding the EU’s industrial competitiveness in the short-term. This is despite the long-term economic opportunities provided by the development of green technologies, and by better resource management, waste minimisation and recycling. At the same time, the Commission’s new impact assessment system, launched in 2003, has had mixed success, with limited attention being given to environmental, social and international impacts.

Moreover, it has proved difficult to secure the engagement of stakeholders or the wider public in the drive for environmental sustainability in the EU amid potentially confusing, high-level strategies, none with much visible impact on the ground.

However, the period of the UK’s Presidency offers a unique window of opportunity to:

- reinvigorate environmental integration initiatives;
- bring greater coherence between the separate EU strategies; and

- make progress in taking them forward in concrete ways that can engage the public.

The next annual EU Spring summit in April 2005 – just a few weeks before the UK takes over the Presidency – will have before it the results of the Commission’s forthcoming mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy, and the review of the EU SDS, due to be completed by the end of this year. It will therefore fall to the UK Presidency to begin to implement what are expected to be significant changes to both. Moreover, in July 2005, all the 6EAP Thematic Strategies should be completed and presented to the Council and the European Parliament, while the mid-term review of the 6EAP itself will also begin during the UK’s Presidency. So, the challenge will be to bring together these different strands to weave together a stronger and more coherent approach to sustainable development in the EU.

What should the UK aim to achieve?

The UK is keen that the Environment Council, through the review of the EU SDS, the implementation of the 6EAP and the Commission’s Environment Policy Review, assess the overall impact of existing instruments and actions in various sectors so as to secure coherence and to identify priorities for future actions.

- What might the UK need to do to respond to the EU SDS review (assuming it is completed by Spring 2005)?
- Should the UK ‘jump-start’ the Cardiff process by using the European Council meeting in October 2005 to inject renewed, high-level political support for environmental integration?
- Should the UK host an event - for example between environment and transport - to demonstrate integration and raise its profile?
- Should other approaches to improving environmental integration be considered, exploiting opportunities from the EU SDS and Impact Assessment process?
- Should the UK seek to reinstate regular reviews of progress by Heads of Government?
- Should the General Affairs Council (Foreign Ministers) be asked to take responsibility for overall co-ordination and the development of standard integration guidelines for each Council’s integration activities?
- Should the Cardiff integration strategies be made more concrete by requiring each Council to set out in detail how it proposes to take forward commitments in relevant 6EAP Thematic Strategies? This could include, for example, the setting of targets, timetables and arrangements for monitoring and reporting.
- Can the Lisbon process be ‘greened’ in different ways, eg by taking forward the real opportunities provided for sustainable growth by the EU’s Environmental Technologies Action Plan (ETAP), and the initiative on Integrated Product Policy? This could be a first step to transforming the Lisbon Process into a more balanced, overarching EU Sustainable Development Strategy.

Better Regulation and Implementation

Over more than twenty years European environmental law and wider policy has achieved higher standards and continued progress in addressing environmental

concerns. A considerable body of environmental Directives, Regulations and other measures has built up and is updated and expanded on a regular basis. The UK has always argued that European environmental legislation should be based on sound scientific analysis, with policy options based clearly on the evidence. Once in place, policy measures should be implemented fully and on time.

Where are we now?

Some EU measures have been criticised for lack of clarity or coherence. There is equally a debate about whether every proposal is really necessary. Recent improvements at the EU level include the introduction of extended impact assessments to accompany important new initiatives. In principle, these allow evidence to be assessed and options discussed with input from stakeholders. In practice, the first batch of assessments has not always lived up to these expectations.

The record of implementing EU environmental policy is still patchy, with a significant number of Member States subject to complaints and infringement proceedings every year. The recent addition of ten new Member States will undoubtedly exacerbate this problem.

What are the main challenges?

There are several ways in which policy making can be strengthened. An effective system of impact assessments subject to sufficient external review is clearly one option. There are cases where problems can be addressed more effectively by measures other than regulation, for example by economic instruments, information and advice or voluntary agreements. The UK has lessons from its own domestic review of policy making which may well be relevant at an EU level.

Improved implementation implies timeliness in responding to European measures, the adoption of appropriate national or regional measures and effective enforcement and practice. Reporting on implementation could be strengthened and Member States encouraged to move more rapidly to comply with Court Judgements, for example by the imposition of fines in a shorter timescale. The Commission could usefully apply a more risk-based approach to the issues on which it begins formal infringement proceedings, to ensure that attention is focussed on serious problems and that the Commission does not become swamped.

What should the UK aim to achieve?

- Should the UK adopt Better Regulation as one of the themes for the environmental dimension of the Presidency?
- What steps could be taken to achieve this in practice?
- Should the UK take a lead in seeking agreement on the means to improve the extended impact assessment procedure?
- Should the UK take steps to emphasise better implementation and enforcement of EU measures during its Presidency?

Investing in the Environment

Funding is needed for a range of environmental initiatives, such as improving basic infrastructure for water and waste management; the appropriate management of protected biodiversity sites; support for the development of cleaner technologies; training; research; and the strengthening of administrative structures for policy development and enforcement. Some EU funding for the environment is made available through the LIFE programme, but the greatest support by far comes through the EU's Structural and Cohesion Funds, and the rural development Regulation. In addition to part-financing environmental projects directly, these funds have also helped to advance environmental protection through making structural spending by Member States conditional on complying with EU legislation such as the habitats and nitrates Directives.

Where are we now?

The size and priorities of all the EU's spending programmes are currently under review, and will be determined by a new 'Financial Perspective' for the period 2007-2013. This has to be agreed at the latest by June 2006, but agreement could come earlier, possibly during the UK Presidency. The funding available for the environment will depend partly on the overall size of the new Financial Perspective. The Commission has proposed a budget of 1.27 percent of the enlarged EU's Gross National Income (GNI), but six Member States (including the UK) have called for this to be reduced to 1 percent. Inevitably, this would squeeze the sums available for the environment, and probably limit the geographical areas eligible for support.

Within this overall envelope, new post-2007 Regulations need to be agreed for the Structural and Cohesion Funds, the CAP, rural development, the new 'LIFE+' programme, and a 7th Research Framework Programme. A number of Member States and NGOs have also called for the establishment of a new, dedicated Natura 2000 Fund to support the management of N2K sites, as provided for by Article 8 of the habitats Directive. However, it seems likely the Commission will propose that such support is channelled through the Structural Funds.

The Commission is expected to table proposals on the Structural, Cohesion and rural development Regulations in July 2004. These will be followed by an important Commission Strategy Paper on Cohesion Policy, setting out Guidelines to steer the development by Member States of their Structural Fund programmes. All these initiatives may still be under negotiation in the Council and Parliament when the UK takes over the Presidency.

What are the main challenges?

- The overriding priority for the Structural and Cohesion Funds will be to support the economic development of the new Member States, all of which have a GDP per head significantly below the EU15 average. Limiting the new Financial Perspective to 1 percent of Community GNI could mean that the richer Member States like the UK could lose eligibility entirely, and therefore the opportunity to

use EU funds to develop the kind of environmental initiatives that have been financed in the past.

- Budget restrictions could also squeeze the size of the new LIFE+ programme, and are likely to bring to an end LIFE-Nature.
- The Structural Funds will give greater support to strategic EU policy priorities, especially the Lisbon process. It will be important that the emphasis in Lisbon on strengthening the EU's competitiveness should not sideline environmental priorities.
- However, one of three 'horizontal' themes for the Structural Funds likely to be proposed by the Commission is 'Environment and Risk Prevention'. This would include support for managing Natura 2000 sites. However, the extent of such support would be determined at Member State (or even regional) level. It is not clear whether the Commission will 'ring-fence' Structural and Cohesion fund money for Natura 2000, nor whether its Strategy Paper on Cohesion Policy will include binding guidelines on how it should be used.
- In the past, Structural Fund spending has supported a number of environmentally damaging infrastructure projects. There is widespread concern that the environmental safeguards incorporated in the current Structural Funds Regulations should be strengthened - for example in relation to the involvement of environmental authorities in programming. They should also be applied (for the first time) to the Cohesion Fund, which post-2007 will assume an even greater role in the new Member States than it has so far in the poorest EU15 countries.
- Under the existing rural development regulation, all Member States are required to develop agri-environment programmes but there are some uncertainties about this policy in future.

What should the UK aim to achieve?

- A concrete opportunity to advance environmental sustainability will arise during the UK Presidency in relation to the new Structural and Cohesion Fund Regulations for the period after 2007. Should the UK take steps to ensure that these – together with a Commission Strategy Paper on Cohesion Policy – provide opportunities for financial support for the management of Natura 2000 sites, and the development and application of green technologies?
- If LIFE-Nature disappears from the new LIFE+ Programme, will a significant proportion of the Structural Funds be ring-fenced for supporting Natura 2000? Is this something that the UK should support?
- Given that the Structural Funds Regulations themselves are likely to focus on broad principles, it is important that the Commission's Strategy Paper on Cohesion addresses environmental priorities. Should there be binding, minimum requirements for the inclusion of environmental projects in Member States' programmes funded by the Structural and Cohesion Funds? What role can the UK take in ensuring that environmental projects receive sufficient funding?
- From an environmental perspective it may be questioned whether the UK should insist on a 1 percent budget ceiling. However, if it is agreed, it is important that outside the poorest (mainly new) Member States, some eligibility for support from the Structural Funds continues. What position should the UK take on this?

- The participation of environmental authorities in all aspects of the development, implementation and evaluation of Structural Funds programmes should be made an explicit requirement in the Regulations. How can the UK secure this?

Conclusions – Influencing the Environmental Agenda of the UK Presidency

The Presidency of the EU is clearly an opportunity for the UK to take a leadership role on environmental issues on both an EU and international stage. Whilst the majority of the UK's priorities will be inherited from ongoing business, the period of the Presidency provides the opportunity to set the agenda, bring new momentum to existing processes and develop new initiatives.

This scoping paper has sought to highlight some the key issues likely to face policy makers. Whilst it is by no means a comprehensive analysis, it is intended to give stakeholders 'food for thought' and to facilitate engagement in the stakeholder seminar on 30 June. A number of key questions stand out from the analysis, and these are presented below. The list is not exhaustive, however, and it is not intended to preclude wider discussion at the seminar.

Some key questions for the UK Presidency:

- In relation to climate policy, how can aviation best be incorporated into emissions trading, and what other EU policy instruments could be used to tackle aircraft emissions?
- On chemicals, how can the need to protect human health and the environment, to safeguard the competitiveness of the European chemicals industry, and to secure a workable and cost-effective regulatory framework all be reconciled?
- Can the EU's Lisbon objective of annual GDP growth of 3 percent be met at the same time as reducing pollution and resource depletion?
- On water resources, how can final agreements on the EU's groundwater and bathing water proposals offer full environmental protection in the most cost-effective manner?
- In relation to biodiversity, how should the UK work to achieve better implementation of the EU's nature Directives, and improve information provision on their effects and effectiveness?
- What particular initiatives in relation to advancing the environmental sustainability of fisheries should the UK champion, and is there best practice it may wish to share?
- Should the UK make the case for further CAP reform, particularly in commodities of greatest interest to developing countries?
- How can the UK ensure that the EU's Environment and Health Action Plan results in improved information on the interactions between health and the environment, and how should actions be shared between local, national, EU and international levels?
- How might the EU's Sustainable Development Strategy and the Commission's new impact assessment system offer new opportunities for strengthening environmental integration?
- What steps should be taken to help improve the implementation of EU environmental legislation, particularly in the context of the EU's recent enlargement?
- Should the UK seek to ensure that the forthcoming Structural Funds Regulations and the accompanying EU Strategy on Cohesion Policy explicitly provide financial support for the management of Natura 2000 sites, and the development and application of green technologies?

Glossary

Cardiff Process	A requirement for the different formations of the Council of Ministers to develop their own strategies for integrating the environment and sustainable development into their activities.
CAFE	Clean Air for Europe (Thematic Strategy)
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CEHAPE	Children's Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy
ECCP	European Climate Change Programme
ETAP	Environmental Technologies Action Plan
EU15	The EU Member States pre enlargement in 2004
EU25	The enlarged Community, as of 1 May 2004
EU ETS	EU Emissions Trading Scheme
EU SDS	EU Sustainable Development Strategy
FIFG	Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GNI	Gross National Income
IPP	Integrated Product Policy
IPPC	Integration Pollution Prevention and Control
Lisbon Strategy	A high level initiative aimed at making the EU the most competitive, knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010.
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
N2K	Natura 2000
REACH	Common name used for the Commission proposal on the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals.
RDR	Rural Development Regulation
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SCP	Sustainable Consumption and Production
Sixth EAP / 6EAP	Sixth Environment Action Programme (Decision 1600/2002)
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WTO	World Trade Organisation

Annex I: Selected Dossiers Likely to be ‘Live’ During the UK Presidency

Communications:

- Integrated Product Policy.
- Health and Environment Action Plan.
- Organic Farming Action Plan.
- Integration of Environmental Protection Requirements into Standardisation.
- Environmental Technologies Action Plan.
- Share of renewable energy sources in the EU.
- Building our common future: Policy challenges and Budgetary means of the Enlarged Union 2007-2013.
- Community Strategy for Dioxins, Furans and Polychlorinated Biphenyls
- Tourism Action Plan.

Legislative proposals:

- REACH - Proposal for a Regulation concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restrictions of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency and amending Directive 1999/45/EC and Regulation.
- Proposal for a Directive on the management of waste from the extractive industries.
- Proposal for a Directive on batteries and accumulators and spent batteries and accumulators on batteries and accumulators.
- Proposal for a Directive on the type-approval of motor vehicles with regard to their reusability, recyclability, and recoverability, and amending Council 70/156/EEC.
- Proposal for a Directive on the protection of groundwater against pollution.
- Proposal for a Directive concerning the quality of bathing water.

Annex 2: Key Dates 2004/05

Date	Measure		Meetings/ Key Date
	Type	Title	
2004			
1 July – 31 December	Netherlands Presidency of the EU		
Expected July	Legislative Proposal	Regulation on the Structural Funds post 2006	
Expected July	Legislative Proposal	Proposal on financing of Natura 2000	
16 July			Landfill acceptance criteria come into force
Expected July	Legislative Proposal	Proposal for a Council Regulation on support for rural development from the EAGGF	
Expected July	Legislative Proposal	Draft Regulation for the new Structural Funds period post 2006	
Expected July	Legislative Proposal	Proposal for a Regulation on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT)	
Expected September	Thematic Strategy	Thematic Strategy on the prevention and recycling of waste	
Expected October	Thematic Strategy	Thematic Strategy on sustainable use of pesticides	
Expected October	Expected Communication	Mercury Strategy	
2 - 14 October			13th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES, Bangkok, Thailand.
25-29 October			The Seventh Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention (COP-7)
1 November			New Commission to be appointed
29 November-10 December			COP 10 and the 21st Session of the Subsidiary Bodies (SBI and SBSTAS) UN FCCC
Expected November	Legislative Proposal	Commission Decision on railway noise	
Expected December	Communication	Communication on the European Climate Change Programme	
22-26 November			16th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol
Expected December	Communication	Report on the implementation of the EU Forest Strategy	
31 December			Member States to present national strategies on Integrated Coastal Zone Management by this date.
6-17 December			COP 10 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Buenos Aires

Expected late 2004	Communication	Review of the Sustainable Development Strategy	
Expected late 2004	Legislative Proposal	Proposal for a measure to ban cadmium in PVC	
Expected end 2004	Communication	Commission report on risks, crisis and national disasters in agriculture	
Expected end 2004	Communication	Communication on the use of economic instruments in environment policy	
Expected end 2004	Communication	Communication on Environment and Employment	
Expected end 2004	Commission Report	Implementation of Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive	
Expected end 2004	Communication	Review of the list of priority hazardous substances in water	
Expected end 2004 – although date uncertain	Legislative Proposal	Cadmium in fertilisers	
Expected end 2004	Legislation linked the soil Thematic Strategy	Proposal for a Directive on biodegradable waste	
Expected end 2004	Legislation linked the soil Thematic Strategy	Proposal for an amendment to Directive 86/278/EEC on sewage sludge	
2005			
2005	UK Presidency of the G8		
1 January – 30 June 2005	Luxembourg Presidency of the EU		
1 January			WTO deadline for the end of negotiations concerning the Doha development agenda.
Expected some time in 2005			WTO Sixth Ministerial Meeting, Hong Kong. Date depends on the progress of Doha round negotiations
Expected some time in 2005	Legislative Proposal	Proposal for a Commission Decision amending Annex II of Commission Directive 2000/53/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on end-of-life vehicles – revision of phase out dates	
1 January			Emissions trading trial to begin lasting to 2007
Expected early 2005	Legislative Proposal	Measure to review Regulation 2001/761/EC on the Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS)	
Expected early 2005	Legislative Proposal	Proposal for Directive amending Directive 96/61/EC of 24 September 1996 concerning integrated pollution prevention and control	
21-25 February			23rd Session of the UNEP Governing Council / Global Ministerial Environment Forum
Before Spring	Communication	Mid term review of the Lisbon	

Council		Strategy	
Spring 2005			Review of the Lisbon Strategy to be discussed at European Summit
Expected Spring 2005	Thematic Strategy	Thematic Strategy on soil protection	
Expected Spring 2005	Communication linked to Soil Thematic Strategy	Communication on soil erosion, decline in organic matter, and contamination	
Expected Spring 2005	Report linked to Soil Thematic Strategy	Report on progress on a soil protection strategy – report on technical and policy measures that exist in the EU on soil	
Expected Spring 2005	Legislative proposal linked to Soil Thematic Strategy	Proposal for a Directive on monitoring the condition of soil	
Expected Spring 2005	Thematic Strategy	Thematic Strategy on the marine environment	
Expected Spring 2005	Thematic Strategy	Thematic Strategy on the Air pollution (CAFE)	
Expected second quarter 2005	Legislative Proposal	Proposal for a Directive on measures to be taken against air pollution by emissions from motor vehicles (Euro 5)	
2-6 May			1st Conference of the Parties (COP-1) of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
16-27 May			UNFCCC session period
Expected June 2005	Expected Communication	Final Report/Action Plan aimed at accelerating the process for implementation of requirements for public safety and use for hydrogen and fuel cell technologies in the EU	
13-17 June			Second meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
1 July - 31 December	UK Presidency of the EU		
Expected mid 2005	Legislative Proposal	Proposal for a Regulation on transport of nuclear waste	
Second half 2005 (tbc)			Joint Ministerial Conference (Ministry of Agriculture/ Environment) on sustainable agriculture
6-8 July			UK G8 Summit in Gleneagles
11 - 15 July			Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity (Under CBD)
22 July			All Thematic Strategies Communications to be published.
19-23			Ad Hoc Open-ended

September			Working Group on the Review of Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
Autumn			Commission to report back to the institutions on progress made in relation to sustainable tourism
Expected autumn	Communication	Report on progress in implementing Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste	
Expected autumn	Communication	Report on the implementation of Directive 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste	
November			9 th RAMSAR COP, Kampala, Uganda
7-18 November			UNFCCC session period
December			Member States should set national threshold values for a number of substances under the proposal for a Directive for the protection of groundwater – by this date
Expected end 2005	Legislative Proposal	Proposal for an amending Directive on plant protection products	
End 2005			Commission hopes that MEPs and the Council will have agreed the new Structural Fund Regulation by this point.