

## Tools for integrating sustainable procurement into spending decisions



There are a number of routes for a local authority to take in order to develop sustainable procurement practices, ranging from introducing comprehensive management systems, to looking at the quick wins.

The following list will introduce you to a number of resources that can be used to assess, monitor and reduce the negative impacts of your purchasing decisions.

**Local Multiplier** - LM3 is a tool to assess the local economic impact of spending decisions. Developed by the New Economics Foundation (nef), the tool been applied in the local government context in Northumberland as well as in a number of community groups. Link [www.neweconomics.org/gen/tools\\_lm3.aspx](http://www.neweconomics.org/gen/tools_lm3.aspx)

**The Sustainable Procurement Cupboard**, also managed by the New Economics Foundation, provides case studies and other documents on local sustainable procurement initiatives across the UK <http://www.procurementcupboard.org/>. You can upload your own resources here too.

**The Sustainable Procurement Information Network** is managed by the East Midland's Centre of Excellence and is a highly comprehensive resource, including templates for specification and Council strategies and policies on sustainable procurement: <http://www.s-p-i-n.co.uk/>

**Flexible Framework** - This is a benchmarking tool, recommend in the UK Government's Sustainable Procurement Task Force report, *Procuring the Future*. This tool is widely used by local authorities across the UK, and recommended by National Centres of Excellence [www.actionsustainability.com/benchmarking/flexible\\_framework.asp](http://www.actionsustainability.com/benchmarking/flexible_framework.asp)

**Carbon management** - In order to make significant carbon reductions, some local authorities are using carbon management as a tool to assess emissions resulting from broad council activity - including procurement. Any holistic carbon management programme will build procurement into its remit. There are a number of tools that can be used for carbon management, and SSN is participating in research to assess their relative benefits. The **Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management Programme** ([www.carbontrust.co.uk/carbon/la/](http://www.carbontrust.co.uk/carbon/la/)) offers a well-structured programme which has been utilised by a number of Scottish local authorities.

**OGC Quick Wins** - For those authorities at an early stage in working with sustainable procurement, it is advisable to start the process by looking at distinct product groups - those where the efficiencies are well demonstrated and where the cost differential is minimal. The **OGC Quick Wins** website at [www.ogcbuyingsolutions.gov.uk/environmental/environmental.asp](http://www.ogcbuyingsolutions.gov.uk/environmental/environmental.asp) provides environmental criteria for a number of product groups (go to identify environmentally-friendly products and contract holders and then Quick Wins).

**ICLEI Procura+ Sustainable Procurement Management Programme** - ICLEI are supporting a network of public authorities across Europe that are embedding sustainable procurement in their operations. The programme includes a management tool, support and peer-learning opportunities. [www.procuraplus.org](http://www.procuraplus.org)

**LEAP** - This project (2003-2006) was carried out with a group of 11 European public authorities, to develop practical routes to joint green procurement practices. The resulting website contains case studies and an online / downloadable toolkit. [www.iclei-europe.org/index.php?leap](http://www.iclei-europe.org/index.php?leap)

## Procurement for Sustainability - the policy context



At an **international level**, action is being driven through the Marrakech Task Force on Sustainable Public Procurement, under the auspices of the UN. The Task Force was established in 2006, and is led by Switzerland. The UK is one of five European countries participating in the Task Force. For more information, download this background paper: Marakech Task Force - Sustainable Procurement Fact Sheet at [http://www.uneptie.org/pc/sustain/resources/MTF/Fact\\_sheet\\_MTF\\_procurement.pdf](http://www.uneptie.org/pc/sustain/resources/MTF/Fact_sheet_MTF_procurement.pdf).

**EU activity** is also driving sustainable procurement, with a focus on 'green public procurement' (GPP) in a number of strategies and supporting directives. Information on this can be found at The EU's GPP mainsite [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/index_en.htm). It is vital that activity to drive sustainable procurement takes place within the EU's broader requirement that all procurement policy should be competitive and non-discriminatory; there are, however, many routes to pursuing sustainable procurement within this framework. EU Directives 17&18 (2004) allow for specification of environmental criteria in calls for tender / product specification / contract performance clauses (within the broader guidelines). The role of whole life costing as an integral part of value for money assessments is being promoted at an EU level. Further information can be found in the EU Buying Green Handbook at [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/handbook\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/handbook_en.htm).

By 2010, the EU wishes to see all member states engaging with GPP at the level of the current best performing country. Indicators are being developed to measure this and will be published in 2007 (with progress monitored year on year). This is likely to be assessed in terms of the value of green tenders as compared to total value of public performance. The current best performing member state is Sweden, where 50% of public administrations include environmental criteria for more than 50% of tenders (link to follow).

According to a survey conducted by ICLEI (see above link), **the UK** is one of five top-performing member states on sustainable (or 'green') procurement (where green purchasing is above the EU average of 19% of tenders). The UK is one of 8 nations that have a draft action plan on GPP. **UK Sustainable Procurement Task Force's 'Procuring the Future' Report** (<http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/publications/procurement-action-plan/index.htm>) was launched in 2005, and the Government's Action Plan was published in response in 2007 - it can be downloaded at <http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/publications/pdf/SustainableProcurementActionPlan.pdf>.

The Sustainable Procurement Task Force was appointed to ensure that the UK meets the challenging UK Sustainable Development Strategy target to be amongst the leaders, in the EU, in sustainable procurement by 2009. The work of the Task Force was split into five work streams: international benchmarking; priorities and data; engaging with suppliers; accountability and capacity building.

Procurement is a devolved matter, and the **Scottish Government's Sustainable Procurement Action Plan** is in development. The publication is expected in 2007, and will be informed by the CSR /

efficiency approach advocated in The McLelland Report (John McClelland's Review of Public Procurement in Scotland) at

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/Procurement/PublicProcurement/Review#top>

. Please also refer to Scottish Government Procurement Directorate webpage at

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/Procurement/PublicProcurement/ProcurementPolicy/operate-responsibility/susdevsummarynote>