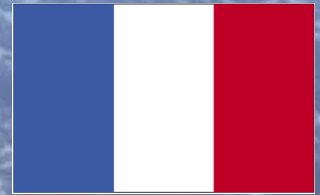# 2011 Survey of resource efficiency policies in EEA member and cooperating countries

COUNTRY PROFILE:

France

Country information on resource efficiency policies, instruments, objectives, targets and indicators, institutional setup and information needs

May 2011

This country profile is based on the information provided by Doris Nicklaus from the French Ministry of Sustainable Development. The information is current as of March 2011.

This country profile was prepared as part of the EEA-ETC/SCP 2011 survey of resource efficiency policies, which aims to collect, analyze and disseminate information about national experience in the development and implementation of resource efficiency policies in EEA member and collaborating countries. The work resulted in the following outcomes:

- **Short 'country profiles' (this document)** - self assessments prepared by countries, describing the current status of resource efficiency policies, including key strategies and action plans, policy objectives, instruments, targets and indicators used, institutional setup and information needs.
- **Summary report** - prepared by the EEA and ETC/SCP, the report reflects on trends, similarities and differences in policy responses, showcases selected policy initiatives from member countries and identifies information needs and knowledge gaps.
- A session on resource efficiency policies during the 2011 EIONET workshop to discuss further needs and to facilitate information sharing and experience exchange among EIONET members.

More information about resource efficiency policies, including an analytical report "Resource efficiency in Europe" and thirty one country profiles, can be found at:

http://www.eea.europa.eu/resource-efficiency

1. Resource use in France – facts and figures

1.1 General facts and figures about the country

Source:
https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html
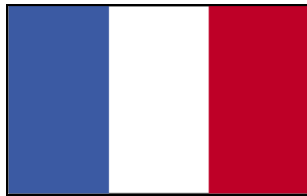
Population (projected inhabitants for 2010) [1]		64,714,074
➤ Percent of total EEA-32		11.%
Surface area (km^2) [2]		643,427
➤ Percent of total EEA-32		11.3%
GDP at market prices – Purchasing Power Standard – Current Prices (Million Euro, 2009) [3]		1,637,680.9
➤ Percent of total EEA-32 (minus Liechtenstein)		12.5%
GDP per capita in Purchasing Power Standards (PPS) [4] EU27=100 (2009)		108
Urban population (rate of pop., 2009) [5]		77.6%
Main economic sectors and their share in total GDP (2009 est.) [2]		
Agriculture		1.8%
Industry		19.2%
Services		79%
EU accession date [6]		Founding member 1.1.1958

Additional relevant background information on France (and on 37 other EEA member and cooperating countries) can be found at the SOER2010 website:
http://www.eea.europa.eu/soer/countries/fr

Factsheet on national sustainable consumption and production policies for France is available at:
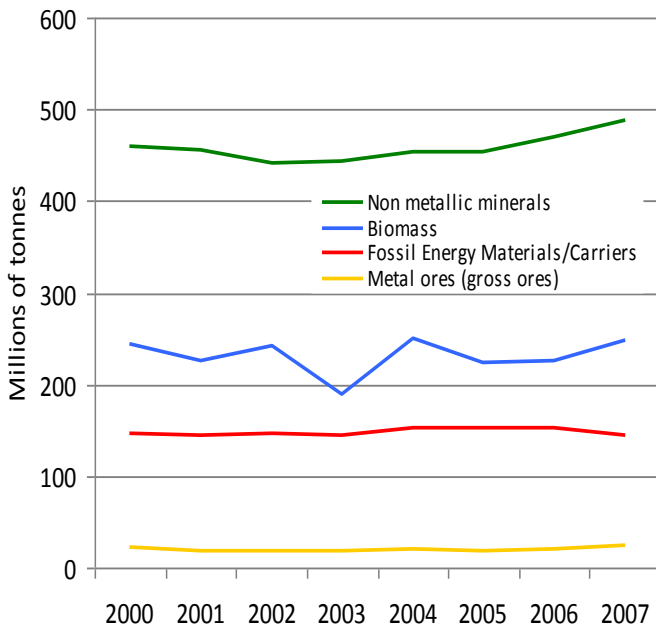http://scp.eionet.europa.eu/facts/factsheets_scp/france

1.2 Facts and figures on resource efficiency for France

Use of resources per capita 2000 and 2007 [tonnes DMC/capita]

France's share in EU-27 total DMC = 11.1%
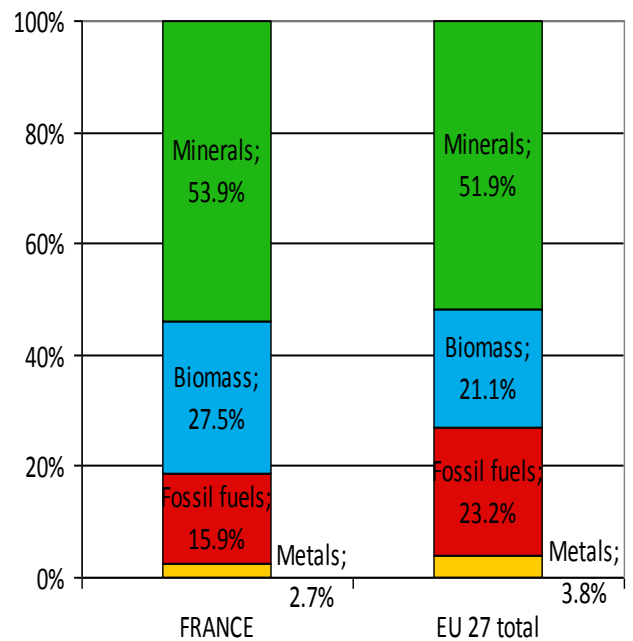
■ 2000 ■ 2005*/2007

EU 27 Average
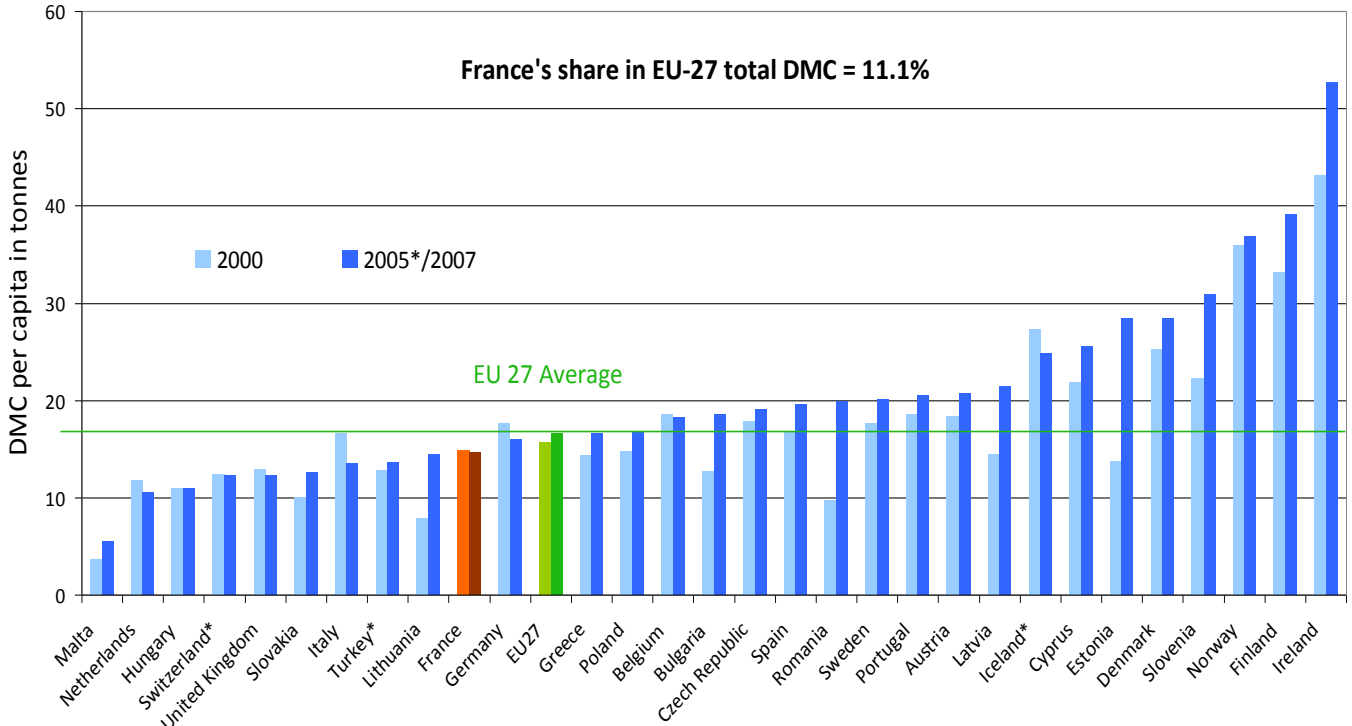
Source: Eurostat, OECD and Total Economy Database [7]   * = For these countries data is for 2000 and 2005.

Domestic Material Consumption by category over time, France

— Non metallic minerals
— Biomass
— Fossil Energy Materials/Carriers
— Metal ores (gross ores)

Source: Eurostat [8]

Breakdown of DMC by type of materials (2007)

FRANCE
Minerals; 53.9%
Biomass; 27.5%
Fossil fuels; 15.9%
Metals; 2.7%

EU 27 total
Minerals; 51.9%
Biomass; 21.1%
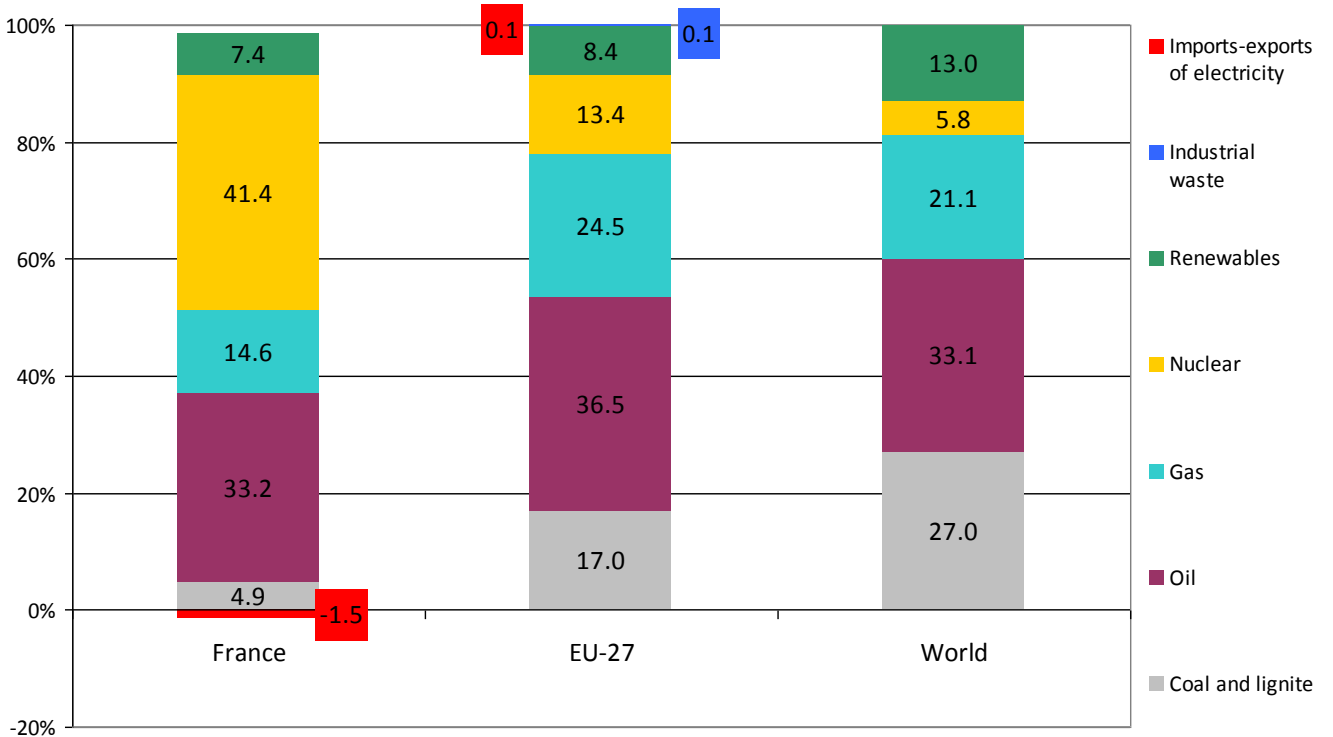Fossil fuels; 23.2%
Metals; 3.8%

Source: Eurostat [8]

Material productivity 2000 and 2007 [USD ppp/ton DMC]
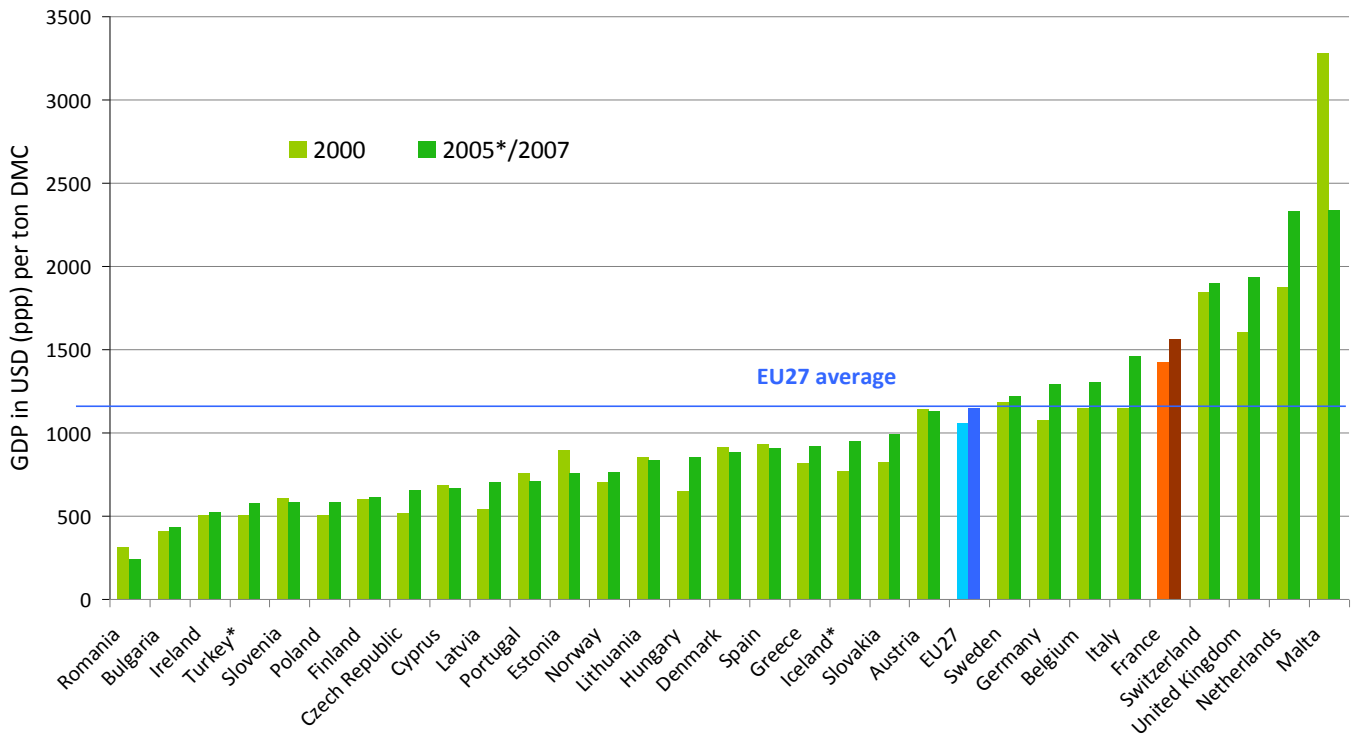
Source: The Conference Board, Total Economy Database, Eurostat [9]
* = For these countries data is for 2000 and 2005.

Primary energy consumption

Source: Eurostat [10]

2. Evolution and main drivers for the development of resource efficiency policies

In 2007 Grenelle Environment enabled a process of engagement with all parties concerned by environmental problems; NGOs, the State, local government, unions and businesses. This consultation was extremely fruitful and led to the putting in place of a programming law which enabled the challenges of sustainable development to become an integral part of most sector based policies (http://www.legrenelle-environnement.fr/). This process enabled all the major economic stakeholders to play a part and increased their willingness to interact with a policy of sustainable development.

The policies for an economic re-launch after the crisis of 2008 have taken account of this willingness and this has led to the starting of work in the strategic areas of the green economy (see above). Resource efficiency is seen as an opportunity for growth. It is therefore essential to have a competitive industrial base in these sectors that will provide tomorrow's jobs.

The import of resources is, at present, managed from a more economic perspective rather than environmental one i.e. ensuring security of supply and reducing external dependence.
The transfer of environmental impacts to other countries is not taken into account in sector based policies at present.
Nevertheless the Observation and Statistical Service (MEDDTL statistical service) every year publishes a brief note on changes in the consumption of materials in France and includes the materials flow indicators the TMR (total material requirement and the TMC (total material consumption).

The waste prevention and management policies remain, at present, a stand-alone area of environmental policy - there is a policy department for waste management. Nevertheless they are being progressively integrated into some sector based policies; this is the case for example in the plan for strategic metals which looks at their recycling. It is also the case in plans for low carbon vehicles. Also, as part of the work on the safety of waste materials, the waste management policy is more and more looking at including a whole life-cycle approach.

3. Overall Policy Approach for Resource Efficiency

The main strategic framework (to 2020) which governs France's actions in terms of sustainable management of natural resources is the **Law that programmes the implementation of Grenelle Environment** (*LAW* no. 2009-967 of 3 August 2009). This law sets out the framework for France's policies for the next ten years.

The objective of this strategic framework is to bring about a new model of sustainable development which respects the environment and also includes lower energy and water consumption as well as lower consumption of other natural resources. It puts sustainable development into a wide range of sector-based policies such as energy, town planning, transport, biodiversity, water, farming and waste management policies.

The change towards a green economy brings a number of opportunities for growth for companies in a variety of sectors. Also, given the development potential of the market and large-scale technical changes which will be required to implement a green economy such as reduction of greenhouse gasses (renewable energy, management, capture and re-use of carbon), reducing energy use and improvement of energy management (buildings with a low environmental impact, low carbon vehicles, logistics, batteries, smart grids), and others that contribute to an economy that is restrained in its use of natural resources (water, waste, green chemistry, biomass materials, metrology, optimisation), France is focusing on 18 strategic areas.

France has also adopted a **National Strategy for Sustainable Development** (NSSD) for the period 2010-2013. The NSSD aims to develop a lower carbon and lower resource economy to make France one of the major players in the green economy. It has fixed concrete and quantifiable eco-responsible objectives in the areas of energy, water, waste, procurement, buildings, transport and greenhouse gasses. It also includes human and social dimensions.

The NSSD is building the foundations of sustainable development around green and equitable development, at one and the same time reducing carbon emissions and lowering the use of natural resources (energy, raw materials, water, space biodiversity etc.), yet also including a human and social dimension.

Law no. 2009-967 of the 3 August 2009:
http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do;jsessionid=?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000020949548&dateTexte=&oldAction=rechJO&categorieLien=id
The strategic industrial areas of the green economy:
http://www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/Ref.pdf
National strategy for sustainable development:
http://intra.cgdd.i2/IMG/pdf/SNDD_cle5d4cdd-1.pdf

4. Strategies or action plans to improve resource efficiency for individual economic sectors, products or product groups

A number of plans and programmes have been put in place:

⇨ **France's Climate Plan** was drawn up for the first time in 2004, revised in 2006 and brought up to date in 2009
www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/09003_PLAN_CLIMAT.pdf.
This document draws together all the policies and measures taken in the fight against greenhouse gases and especially those implemented as part as Grenelle Environment (see above). The implementation and attaining of the Grenelle objectives should mean that we can reduce greenhouse gases to 437 MteqCO2 in 2020, a reduction of 21,8 % in greenhouse gas emissions as compared with 2005 (558 MteqCO2) and a reduction of 22.8 % in comparison with 1990 (565 MteqCO2). To achieve this the following measures have been put in place:

- **Action plan on buildings** (introduced in 2009):
  This aims to put into practice energy conservation and greenhouse gas reduction measures in buildings.
  (http://www.plan-batiment.legrenelle-environnement.fr/)
- **Development plan for renewable energy** (November 2008):
  This is a selection of measures that aims to facilitate the development of renewable energy. The target is to achieve the objective of 23% renewable energy as a proportion of total energy consumption by 2020. The way in which this objective is to be reached is laid down in detail in each part of the **National Energy Plan for Renewables** which was presented to the European Commission in August 2010.
  (http://www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/Politique-de-developpement-des,13554.html)
- **National plan for the development of electric and hybrid vehicles** (October 2009):
  This aims to have 2 million vehicles on the roads with low carbon emissions by 2020).
  (http://www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/Un-plan-national-pour-developper,15547.html)
  An active modal shift policy has also been put in place as part of Grenelle Environment. It aims to develop essential, vital transport infrastructure, whether this is rail (in the widest sense) or sea and river transport
  (http://www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/-Transport-intermodal-.html)

⇨ In the agricultural sector two plans aim to reduce consumption of raw materials and thus reduce environmental impacts linked to this activity. This consists of:
- The **Ecophyto Plan 2018** (2008 - 2018). This aims to reduce consumption of pesticides by 50% (if possible) within ten years, if possible.
  (http://agriculture.gouv.fr/ECOPHYTO-2018)
- The **Organic Agriculture Plan** (2008 - 2012) whose objective is to triple the area being farmed organically by 2012.
  (http://agriculture.gouv.fr/plan-agriculture-biologique,939)

⇨ A **Waste Action Plan** (2009-2012) has been put in place to reduce, at source, the production of waste and encourage the development of recycling and recovery. Safety and recycling objectives have been fixed, the objective being a large reduction in the quantity of waste that is incinerated and stored. Work is underway to draw up a national plan for the prevention of waste.
(http://www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/Un-plan-d-actions-gouvernemental.html)

⇨ France has had a **National Strategy for Biodiversity** (SNB) since 2004. This strategy is a major instrument in the national mobilisation for the protection and development of biodiversity, both on the mainland and overseas. It includes all marine species in the waters over which we have national sovereignty and is rolled out operationally in ten action plans [1] and local overseas plans for each dependant territory. Ten or so ministerial departments are implementing or drawing up their sector based action plans which contain targeted and practical courses of action to encourage biodiversity in their spheres of activity. This strategy is in the process of being revised in order, in particular, to take into account the Grenelle Environment commitments and the new commitments taken at the 10th Conference of the Parties on Biological Diversity (Nagoya, October 2010).
(http://www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/Les-plans-d-actions-de-la.html).

⇨ On 27 April 2010 France put in place a **Strategic metals plan** (metals which are important for French industry, especially those used in the area of technology that relates to the green economy).This plan lays stress on the need to identify French vulnerability in the various areas under consideration so as to discover, if required, how to remedy the situation, it also aspires to extend geological knowledge with targeted exploration campaigns. It will aim, should the need arise, to promote sustainable exploitation, develop new tools for use in exploration and investigate ways to make the extraction and the transformation of strategic metals easier. It will also look at the recycling policy for strategic metals and strengthen governmental action by appointing a senior civil servant for strategic metals. Governmental action has been strengthened by the creation of the **Committee for Strategic Metals** (COMES) in January 2011. The COMES mission is to improve information about the needs of industry in the area of strategic metals, to identify the most critical resources, bring up to date the mining inventory and re-launch mining exploration, on land and at sea, accelerate the carrying out of recycling projects, increase efforts in research and development, especially in the area of substitution and develop the necessary European and international cooperation.

⇨ Following Grenelle Environment, France has initiated, for all Ministries, an "**Exemplary State" Plan** (PAE) for the years 2009 to 2012 which aims to progressively modify the way they carry out their missions. It concerns day to day purchases, eco-responsible measures (behaviour) and the social responsibility of the State.

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[1] The SNB action plans are: natural habitats, farming, forests, sea, overseas, international, research, tourism, land transport infrastructure and planning. They are undertaken by the relevant Ministry.

(http://intra.portail.i2/article.php3?id_article=4801&var_recherche=plan+%E9tat+exemplaire)
A dedicated intranet has been put in place
(http://achat.metier.i2/index.php3?forcer_lang=true&lang=fr)

The plans and action programmes which target products or groups of products show that there are, at present, two types of sector based policies:

⇨ **Tools for sustainable consumption**
- France has an active policy for the development and promotion of Type I ecolabels (NF Environment and European Ecolabel)
- France has put in place a system which aims to introduce environmental labelling of consumer products (article 228 of the Law no. 2010-788 known as "Grenelle 2"). To this end, since 2008, a multi-stakeholder platform led by ADEME and AFNOR supervises transverse and sector based working parties charged with the development of a general method of calculating the environmental impact of products (first version published September 2009) and rules for categories of products. France will launch a national trial on 1st July 2011. (http://affichage-environnemental.afnor.org/)
- France, through its public procurement law, encourages the inclusion of environmental and social criteria in public sector contracts. To allow for this, criteria have been developed for broad categories of products and services by multi-stakeholder working groups led by the public bodies. (http://www2.ademe.fr/servlet/KBaseShow?sort=-1&cid=96&m=3&catid=13750)

⇨ Waste management policies achieved through increased responsibility of producers. Beyond those areas targeted by European regulation, France has also put in place increased responsibility of producers in the areas of textiles, graphic paper, health waste, specific diffuse waste and furniture.

Finally, work is at present underway to draw up a plan for sustainable material management. This concerns mainly the creation of a structuring framework for the actions undertaken by the various ministerial departments for greater sector based policy consistency. The aim is to also include a strong consumption element in policies that usually target more upstream aspects of the value chain.

5. Individual types of resources identified as priority for national or sector-specific resource efficiency policies

The fight against climate change has been recognised as priority No. 1 in the Programming Law 2009-967 (see above). In this context, some resources, fossil fuels which we need to reduce consumption of, rare metals, biomass, organic waste, have a particular part to play given the role they have in the achievement of the objectives for the reduction of greenhouse gases.

In France the preservation of biodiversity calls for collective awareness and the law which enshrines the national commitment to the environment, Grenelle 2, expresses this seamlessly, in particular in the impetus it gives to an innovative dynamic for the preservation and restoration of ecological continuity, the Green and Blue Infrastructure.

These are very ambitious structuring measures: they put the preservation of biodiversity into planning decisions at every level, especially in the Regional Spatial Strategies (ScoT) and in the Local Development Frameworks (PLU). The legislative measures are today very successful with the Green and Blue infrastructure clearly defined and on a sound legislative basis with real powers as concerns all planning projects and documents from the State and local authorities, within the context of shared governance.[2].

http://www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/-La-Trame-verte-et-bleue,1034-.html

The work underway at present as part of a future plan for sustainable material management will most probably lead to a more precise definition of priority resources.

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[2] Law no.2009-967 of 3 August 2009 for programming the implementation of Grenelle Environment (Grenelle 1) sets as an objective the creation of Green and Blue Infrastructure by the end of 2012 . The Green and Blue infrastructure is one of the tools being used to improve biodiversity (SCAP, SNB.etc.). It has also altered article L.110 of the planning code to include the presentation of biodiversity especially through conservation, la restoration and the creation ecological continuities.

Law no.2010-788 or 12 July 2010 detailing the national commitment to the environment (Grenelle 2) includes:
- the inclusion of the Green and Blue infrastructure in the Environment Code (article L. 371-1 and following), with a definition, objectives, measures for the Green and Blue infrastructure and a link to the SDAGE,
- Inclusion of ecological continuities in the Planning Code (articles L. 121-1, L. 122-1, L. 123-1 and following), with preservation and restoration objectives for ecological continuities).

6. Strategic objectives, targets and indicators on resource efficiency

The programming law for the implementation of Grenelle fixed a number of sector based objectives in a variety of areas including not just climate change but also transport, water, biodiversity, health and waste. These objectives have been taken up for the most part in the national strategy for sustainable development (see above). Here, for illustrative purposes are some examples of objectives.

General objectives (enshrined in the law for the implementation of Grenelle Environment - 2009)

⇨ ensure a new model of sustainable development which respects the environment combined with a lowering of energy and water consumption as well as other natural resources
⇨ ensure sustainable growth without compromising the needs of future generations

Quantitative objectives for reductions in greenhouse gases

- Greenhouse gases reduction objective by 2020: - 20%,
- Energy efficiency objective : 20 %,
- Renewable energy objective: at least 23% of total energy consumption by 2020,
- Overseas regions: by 2020 to achieve 50% renewable energy and reach complete energy autonomy by 2030.

These objectives are laid out in sector based policies:

Buildings

⇨ reduction of energy consumption in existing buildings of at least 38% by 2020,
⇨ All new buildings to be low energy (BBC) by 2012 and energy positive (BEPOS) by 2020,
⇨ refurbishment of 400,000 homes per year from 2013,
⇨ refurbishment of 800,000 of the most energy intensive social housing units by 2020,
⇨ commitment to the energy refurbishment of all State and public buildings before the end of 2012.

Transport

- reduction of greenhouse gas emissions over 20% of the transport sector by 2020,
- increase by 25% the share of non-road and non-air freight by 2012,
- double the share of non-road freight going to and coming from ports by 2020,
- make biofuels 10% of petrol and diesel consumption by 2020,
- reduce average emissions of new vehicles to 95 g of CO_2/km by 2020,
- achieve 10% renewable energy in the transport sector.

General objectives concerning water conservation and biodiversity

- Creation of the Green and Blue thread [3] by the end of 2012. This will aim to stop the loss of biodiversity by preserving the services that biodiversity provides and restoring the network of natural habitats in order to allow species to circulate and interact. This will contribute, in particular, to adaptation to climate change. These land and water networks, known as ecological continuities, are made up of reservoirs linked to one another by ecological corridors (http://www.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/-La-Trame-verte-et-bleue,1034-.html).
- Place 2% at least of the national landmass under robust protection within 10 years achieved, in particular, by the creation of 3 new national parks.
- Creation of protected marine areas to cover 10% of those waters over which the State is sovereign and within territorial waters, by 2012 in mainland France and 20% by 2020 half of which will be fishing reserves.
- Acquire and preserve 20,000 hectares of wetlands.
- By 2020-2030 preserve one third of our riverbanks.

Objectives in the agriculture and forestry sectors

- Achieve 6% of the agricultural surface being farmed organically by 2012 and 20% by 2020.
- Reduce by half the use of phytopharmaceutical products and biocides within 10 years.
- In animal husbandry reduce dependence on imported raw materials being used for making animal feed.
- Achieve a figure of 30% of low energy farms by 2012.
- By 2012 achieve the target of 20% of organic products being used in hospitals, schools, canteens etc.
- Have 50% of farms applying for environmental certification.
- By 2010 increase purchases of wood by the State to be 100% from sustainable forests (eco-certified).

In the area of waste management

- Reduce the production of household waste and similar by 7% by 2014,
- Aim to re-cycle 35% of household waste and similar materials in 2012 and 45% in 2015,
- Attain a 75% recycling rate for household packaging by 2012,
- Attain a 75% re-cycling rate for 75% of industrial waste by 2012,
- Reduce by 15% the quantity of waste incinerated and stored by 2012 as compared with 2008,
- Disseminate local plans and programmes for the prevention of waste.

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[3] - Or to use the term used by the DGE – a green and blue infrastructure

All of these objectives have been given indicators and an annual monitoring chart will be put in place.

In parallel, since 2006, in order to inform and sensitise all economic actors to the need to understand the environmental impact of our consumption and production patterns, France has published annually the 10 indicators of sustainable development. They describe how France is coping with the main environmental challenges: water and air quality, changes to biodiversity, greenhouse gas emissions, waste production and spending on environmental protection. (http://www.stats.environnement.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/uploads/media/10_key_environmental_indicator_for_France_2010_01.pdf)

In particular:

- national activity in the area of material flow accounts at macro-economic level was begun at the end of 2006 by the statistical department (SOeS) of the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Transport and Housing (MEDDTL) based on the method in the guides drawn up by Eurostat in 2001 and the OECD in 2008. It includes calculation of hidden flows based on the methodology developed by the Wuppertal Institute.
(http://www.stats.environnement.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/index.php?id=3459 and http://www.stats.environnement.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/publications/nos-publications/etudes-documents/2009/matieres-mobilisees-par-l-economie-francaise-comptes-de-flux-pour-une-gestion-durable-des-ressources.html)

The productivity of resources is one of the indicators know as 1st level indicators in the national strategy for sustainable development.
(http://www.stats.environnement.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/indicateurs/indicateurs-de-developpement-durable-nationaux.html)

Equally, France is engaged in assessing the environmental footprint of final demand on the basis of macro-economic calculations using input-output techniques based on a combination of physical environmental accounts broken down by section with the input-output tables from the national accounts. This type of footprint aims to typify the environmental pressure exerted by a population relative to income levels. The corresponding pressure covers at one and the same time direct pressure by the population and indirect pressure through the goods and services this population consumes, whether these are produced in France or abroad.
The carbon footprint of French final demand, a first estimate of which should be made in 2010, has therefore been introduced into the 1st level indicators of the national strategy for sustainable development.
(http://www.stats.environnement.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/indicateurs/indicateurs-de-developpement-durable-nationaux.html)

France expects to extend the production of this type of indicator into other areas, in particular the extraction and use of water, the production of waste and consumption of materials.

These indicators are not yet being used as tools to guide an overall policy of sustainable management of resources. They will be used in this way in the context of work relating to the future plan on the sustainable management of materials.

7. The institutional setup for the development and implementation of resource efficiency policies

The implementation of resource efficiency policies is led by the ministerial departments in charge of the sector based policies. Depending on the sector concerned, these departments are either in the Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development, Transport and Housing - MEDDTL (this is the case for waste, transport and energy), or in other ministries (Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, as far as education is concerned, and so on), working closely with the MEDDTL.

The putting in place of the Green and Blue infrastructure is linked to the establishment of appropriate governance at each level of administration, bringing together all the stakeholders concerned. This is why a national committee and regional Green and Blue infrastructure committees, which bring together local bodies, have been put in place to ensure that the consistency of the Green and Blue infrastructure is maintained at national level and also they monitor and evaluate the measures used for its implementation.

Local authorities have a major part to play in this process. It is not just the regions, obviously, because they are the ones who draw up jointly with the State the regional plans for ecological consistency, but also the Ministries and all the other lower tiers of government.

The Environmental and Energy Agency (ADEME) also plays a part in the implementation of policies in the areas of the environment, energy and sustainable development. The agency makes its expertise and advice available to business, local authorities, public bodies and the public at large. It also helps in the financing of projects, from research to implementation in the areas of waste management, soil conservation, energy efficiency and renewable energy as well as sustainable production and consumption and sustainable towns and rural areas. (http://www2.ademe.fr/servlet/getDoc?id=11433&m=3&cid=96)

In addition, ADEME, with the support of the regional services of the MEDDTL, methodologically supports the implementation of local climate-energy plans and finances, as part of a process of contractualisation between the State and local government, the best measures for reducing greenhouse gasses and energy demand.

The regional services of the State (regional préfectures) draw up, together with the regions, national climate, air and energy regional plans, which serve as a strategic reference resource for actions taken by local authorities in the areas of mitigation and adaptation to climate change and air quality.

The National Agency for Water and Aquatic Environments (ONEMA) and the Water Agencies intervene in the area of water pollution reduction policies; for example the Ecophyto 2018 plan). (http://www.onema.fr/) and (http://www.lesagencesdeleau.fr/v2/pages/les-six-agences-de-leau-francaises.html)

8. Selected policy instruments or initiatives on resource efficiency presented in more detail

Environmental labelling

France has put in place a system which aims to introduce environmental labelling of consumer products (article 228 of the Law no. 2010-788 known as "Grenelle 2"). To this end, since 2008, a number of key stakeholders led by ADEME and AFNOR supervise transverse and sector based working parties charged with the development of a general method of calculating the environmental impact of products (first version published September 2009) and rules for categories of products. France will launch a national trial on 1st July 2011. The aim is to make consumers aware and progressively guide them towards greener products, while at the same time encouraging producers to measure their impact and save natural resources.

The Grenelle Laws provides for the consumer to have environmental information on products, i.e. an ecological price will be provided as well as the ordinary price.
This measure will be implemented progressively, product category by product category, on the basis of the national trial which will begin on 1st July 2011.
Environmental information on consumer products will take into account the carbon footprint of products and also any major impacts from their life cycle such as consumption of resources, different types of pollution and impacts on biodiversity - depending of the various characteristics of each type of product.

The objective is to include an environmental component in consumers' purchase criteria and to provide the value chains with new indicators that will increase eco-awareness measures and resource efficiency.

Since 2008, three mutually dependent lines of development have been simultaneously deployed in order to attain this ambitious objective:
- The drawing up of legislative and regulatory support, in order to encourage and maintain the commitment of the various private sector players to work on common future labelling.
- The sharing of costs and best practice within the ADEME-AFNOR platform that was created to support this aim and now has more than 600 participants representing stakeholders, the various industry sectors and NGOs. The work is advancing steadily and has already published a general methodology (BP X30-323 - General principles for the environmental labelling of widely used products), a detailed methodological annexe and two sector based rules.
  This has been added to by sector based rules by category of product, within ten or so sector based working groups (food products, household products, furniture, textiles etc.) and co-chaired by ADEME and the trade organisation concerned. Pilot projects are used to feed into sessions in the various groups.
  In parallel ADEME has begun drawing up a public database in order to supply generic information that can be accessed by everyone as well as an on-line interface (bilingual, on-line and looking at specific questions by category of product) which aims to make calculating indicators easier. The indicators are calculated on the basis of a mix of public generic data (average values or those judged representative) and product and sector-

specific data.
(http://affichage-environnemental.afnor.org/);

- Support by public bodies for the various current voluntary carbon footprint labelling initiatives in order to show, by example and on the ground, that this labelling is feasible and to gather early feedback. These pilot projects will grow in size and number with the national trials which will be launched from 1st July 2011.

Finally, France is participating in international and European discussions which aim to harmonise methodologies and is also exchanging information and sharing best practice.

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Green and Blue thread: green and blue infrastructure

The putting in place of the Green and Blue infrastructure in France constitutes one of the major actions of Grenelle Environment. This is a new way of thinking about biodiversity and its preservation that covers the whole country and takes into account those areas that are classified as ordinary. This active and ambitious choice has meant that France is in the forefront in the fields of conservation and biodiversity, ready to take up the new Nagoya commitments - to recognise or create green and blue infrastructure at national level and more especially at Community and international level.

The green and blue infrastructure hopes to put an end to the erosion of biodiversity by preserving and restoring the network of natural habitats and allowing species to circulate and interact. These networks of exchanges, called ecological continuities, are made up of reservoirs of biodiversity linked to one another by ecological corridors.

The Green and Blue infrastructure includes a green component which references land-based natural and semi-natural environments and a blue component which references to the aquatic network and wetlands (rivers, canals, ponds, wetlands etc.) These two components form an indissoluble whole which is best expressed in the interface areas (especially wetlands and vegetation along river banks). The conservation and restoration of ecological continuities implies taking action wherever this is possible - in rural areas, at the level of waterways and in urban areas.

The legislative measures have now been established with the Green and Blue infrastructure clearly defined and on a sound legislative basis with real powers, as concerns all planning projects and documents from the State and local authorities, within the framework of shared governance.

It also assumes that appropriate governance is put in place at each level of government and that all the stakeholders concerned are a part of this. This is why the government has wished to put in place a national Green and Blue infrastructure committee and regional committees that bring together all local stakeholders. They will have a particular oversight role; maintaining the consistency of the Green and Blue infrastructure at national level and also monitoring and evaluating the measures to implement it.

Local authorities have a major part to play in this process. It is not just the regions, obviously since they are the ones who draw up jointly with the State the regional plans for ecological consistency, but also the Departments and all the other lower tiers of government. All have a role to play as decision makers but over and above that, in the way they are able to bring the Green and Blue infrastructure to life, as project managers for the restoration of ecological continuities for example.

The Green and Blue infrastructure is a measure whose greatest importance is at local level. It is vital to leave local areas and their people a wide margin of action and to encourage their ability to innovate. The implementation of the Green and Blue infrastructure cannot therefore be undertaken in a top down way, but by exchanges taking place at all different levels.

The Green and Blue infrastructure, particularly because it goes beyond a few particular areas protected by legislation or natural habitats that are of special interest, should allow biodiversity to penetrate into peoples every-day lives. The research, publicising and teaching, which will be vital for the success of the Green and Blue infrastructure, should make it possible to reach everybody and encourage a step change in the conservation and restoration of biodiversity. In the same way the Green and Blue infrastructure will be yet another way of improving understanding and more importantly supporting innovation through the development of new tools for better understanding as well as monitoring and evaluation.

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9. Topics of interest and information needs for follow up work

⇨ The concept of resource efficiency has not at present been defined. So, to move forward and to avoid duplication of other existing policies and initiatives (for example the Thematic strategy on the sustainable use of natural resources) it would seem useful to define this concept especially by making clear how it is different from other similar concepts such as the sustainable management of natural resources.

⇨ It would be interesting not to focus exclusively on a general presentation of resource strategies either drawn up or being drawn by Member States. This presentation, interesting though it might be, should be rounded off by the presentation of more targeted innovative and operational approaches like, for example, the Netherlands value chain approach.

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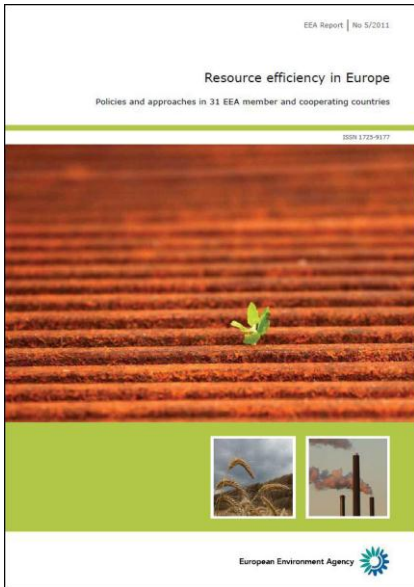
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Policies and approaches in 31 EEA member and cooperating countries

Further information about resource efficiency policies, including the analytical report and thirty-one detailed country profiles, are available on the EEA website:

http://www.eea.europa.eu/resource-efficiency

Selected examples of resource efficiency policies, instruments or targets presented in the thirty one detailed country profiles