

Sustainable consumption and production in the European Union



European Commission

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1. INTRODUCTION

At the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002, all countries committed themselves to promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead. More specifically, countries made a commitment to promote the development of a 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, in support of national and regional initiatives.

In March 2003, the European Council (the EU Heads of State or Government) identified sustainable consumption and production and the development of the 10-year framework as one of the key priorities for the EU in the follow-up to the WSSD. This was re-emphasised in the Commission Communication ‘The World Summit on Sustainable Development one year on: implementing our commitments’ where sustainable consumption and production is one of three overarching objectives ⁽¹⁾. Achieving more sustainable consumption and production patterns is first and foremost an EU internal challenge: putting our own house in order by delivering at home what we would like others to do too. This is not to forget that our consumption practices within the EU are actions which in themselves can have a significant influence over the sustainability of development in other countries.

This report is an inventory of policies, activities and instruments at the European Community level with best practice examples from EU Member States.

Why target consumption and production patterns?

Climate change, loss of natural resources, extinction of species and environmental damage caused by emissions and waste are results of unsustainable patterns of consumption and production. Such patterns, especially in developed countries, can threaten the global environment as well as social and economic welfare.

In the decade since Agenda 21 was adopted in Rio de Janeiro, technological development and innovation have increased resource efficiency and enabled environmental gains. These gains are, however, often outweighed by increased consumption and changes in life styles, such as increasing mobility. There are also growing disparities in consumption levels between developed and developing countries as well as a widening gap between the wealthy and the poor.

Sustainable consumption and production is a challenge and an opportunity. More efficient use of resources in order to reduce economic costs and environmental impacts offers benefits to society, the environment and the economy. It creates business opportunities, for innovative environmental technologies as well as for services.

What does the inventory cover?

This inventory aims at giving a comprehensive but non-exhaustive picture of EU-level policies, instruments and activities either currently in place or being developed, with specific relevance to

⁽¹⁾ http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/wssd/eu_documents_en.html

achieving the WSSD goals on sustainable consumption and production (SCP). The inventory also provides selected examples of best practice at Member State level. It gives an overall view of the EU's current activities on SCP and points to sources of further information. It is intended as an EU contribution to the international work and information exchange on SCP (United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development and the Marrakech process, United Nations Environment Programme/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (UNEP) United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and other regional meetings).

The scope and structure adopted in the inventory is based on the questionnaire and approach presented by United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs and UNEP at the Expert Meeting on Sustainable Consumption and Production in Marrakech, June 2003. The inventory addresses both general and horizontal policy strategies and instruments as well as key economic sectors and issues, under separate chapters. In practice, elements under these chapters and various headings are interlinked so that some elements would also fit under other headings.

The inventory itself is neither an assessment of the effectiveness of the existing policies and tools, nor a policy paper. It provides a factual 'photograph' of what is being done at the EU level and could thus be used when addressing potential gaps, improving coherence and setting priorities for future work.

The Commission is undertaking a substantive and detailed review of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy in 2004/05. This upcoming review will result in overall strategy recommendations on sustainable development at the level of the European Council.

Role of Member States

This inventory lists relevant policies, activities and instruments developed and adopted at the EU level. But changing consumption and production patterns is not only a priority on the EU's shared agenda. It is also a field in which action by Member States and at the local level is playing a crucial role.

Many of the policies and instruments needed to influence consumption habits and environmental performance in key sectors are formulated, adopted and applied at the national level. Furthermore, implementation of Community-level policies takes place at the national level. Some Member States are currently developing their own programmes or frameworks on SCP, or integrating SCP into the national sustainable development strategies.

In the inventory, selected best practice examples from a number of Member States have been added to complement the Community-level policies by demonstrating practical experiences with SCP policies and instruments. The examples are only illustrative and do not cover the entire range of activities in a particular country ⁽¹⁾. Complementarity and coherence between the Community level and the national level activities in Member States remains crucial. The Commission has undertaken a review of national sustainable development strategies highlighting the great variety of approaches taken as well as opportunities for joint action ⁽²⁾.

⁽¹⁾ More information on national best practices can be found on
http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/wssd/index_en.html

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/pages/links_en.htm#_6

2. General and horizontal policy strategies and instruments

2.1. General policy framework

Sustainable consumption and production is at the core of sustainable development, encompassing the three dimensions — economic, social and environmental. The inventory should thus be seen in the context of the European Union's Lisbon Strategy of Economic and Social Renewal (2000) ⁽¹⁾ and Sustainable Development Strategy (Gothenburg, 2001) ⁽²⁾, which provide the broad framework for promoting sustainable consumption and production in the EU. In June 2000, the European Commission launched its Social Policy Agenda for the period 2000–05 ⁽³⁾. The agenda provides the roadmap for employment and social policy.

At Lisbon, EU leaders stated their objective of making the EU the world's 'most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy' by 2010. The European Commission has set up a High-Level Group on the Lisbon Strategy. The Group is to look into ways of injecting fresh stimulus into the Lisbon Strategy, in particular by improving delivery of the objectives set and by involving Member States and stakeholders more closely. It will also be assessing the instruments and methods used so far. The work of the Group will help the Commission in preparing proposals for the mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy at the European Council in March 2005.

The adoption of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy in 2001 added a third, environmental pillar to the Lisbon Strategy. The need to pursue, in a balanced way, economic growth, social improvements and environmental protection was translated into detailed objectives and actions. The Strategy identifies six key areas: climate change, health, natural resources, poverty and exclusion, ageing and demography, land use and mobility. The commitments made by the EU at international fora, notably at the WSSD but also in Doha and Monterrey, have complemented the Strategy with an external dimension.

As agreed in Gothenburg, the EU Sustainable Development Strategy will undergo a thorough review at the start of each new Commission. Based on the assessment of progress made and current trends, the review will provide political guidance for the further implementation of the Strategy. In July 2004, the Commission launched a public consultation to gather the views of citizens and stakeholders to prepare for the review ⁽⁴⁾. One of the issues to be addressed is strengthening coherence between our internal and external policies and commitments.

⁽¹⁾ COM 2000/7: http://europa.eu.int/comm/lisbon_strategy/pdf/lisbon_en.pdf

⁽²⁾ COM(2001)264 final: http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2001/com2001_0264en01.pdf

⁽³⁾ COM(2000) 379 final: http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/general/com00-379/com379_en.pdf

⁽⁴⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/sustainable/pages/consult_en.htm

Germany: National process of sustainable consumption and production

As a direct response to Chapter III of the WSSD, the Federal Ministry for the Environment (BMU) started a national process on sustainable consumption and production involving all relevant stakeholders. The aim of this process is twofold:

- firstly, to launch new initiatives in a multi-stakeholder approach. BMU will organise workshops on special subjects (such as communal activities, SMEs, information strategies, projects to promote 'quality consumption' and 'regional consumption') aiming at starting new stakeholder-driven activities;
- secondly, to improve coordination and monitoring of existing projects through regular reports and stakeholder meetings. (www.bmu.de)

While Lisbon and Gothenburg provide the broader framework the EU's environmental goals are laid down in the Sixth Community Environment Action Programme (6EAP) ⁽¹⁾. The key objectives are to ensure a high level of protection and to break the link between environmental pressures and economic growth. By 2005 the 6EAP will be complemented by seven thematic strategies with clear objectives and targets in key areas: air quality, soil protection, sustainable use of pesticides, protection and conservation of the marine environment, waste prevention and recycling, sustainable use and management of natural resources and urban environment. While all are relevant for sustainable consumption and production, the strategies on natural resources, waste and urban environment will contribute directly to achieving the objectives of Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, chapter III on SCP.

In addition, the EU Environment Technology Action Plan (ETAP) is a major contribution to promoting sustainable consumption and production. Adopted in January 2004 it proposes concrete steps and a comprehensive framework for enhancing the development and dissemination of environmental technologies, emphasising synergies between the three dimensions of sustainable development. ETAP also places the EU's work for sustainability in a global context since, just as the resources the EU uses are not limited to those from Europe, nor are their negative environmental impacts.

SCP requires an integrated approach to policy making. To get other sectors to take on board environmental considerations in their policy decisions, the European Council requested in 1998 different Council formations (groupings of ministers from the Member States responsible for different sectors) to prepare strategies to integrate environmental considerations into their policies. Having started with agriculture, energy and transport, this so-called Cardiff Process now covers nine sectors — including industry, internal market, development, fisheries, general affairs and economic and financial affairs. A stocktaking of progress was completed in 2004. It shows the need for renewed action to encourage integration as part of the Cardiff Process and recommends a series of measures at EU, national and local levels to support integration, including measures to sell integration to other sectors ⁽²⁾.

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/2002/l_242/l_24220020910en00010015.pdf

⁽²⁾ see <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/integration/integration.htm> for more details and stocktaking report COM (2004) 394 final.

United Kingdom: Government Framework for Sustainable Consumption and Production

In 2003, the UK government launched 'Changing patterns: the UK Government Framework for Sustainable Consumption and Production' to contribute to the WSSD commitment to 'encourage and promote the development of a 10-year framework of programmes'. The main features of the policy approach are:

- taking a holistic approach, which considers whole life-cycles of products and services, intervening to deal with problems as early as practicable in the resource/waste flow;
- working with the grain of markets and identifying and tackling market failures;
- integrating SCP thinking and objectives in all policy development and implementation;
- using a package of policy measures and following the principles of better regulation;
- stimulating innovation in all its facets.

(<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/business/scp/changing-patterns.pdf>)

Social policy is integral for the dynamic and sustainable development of modern, open economies and societies. Promoting active labour-market policies and investments in research, education and training human capital for the knowledge-based economy underpin economic growth and reduce the risk of social exclusion. Investing in high labour standards raises productivity and reduces costs associated with accidents at work and unsafe working practices. Investments in active social inclusion policies improve the integration of disadvantaged groups into the labour market and thus help to strengthen productivity and economic growth. Priority areas include creating more and better jobs, combating social exclusion and all forms of discrimination, strengthening social dialogue and gender equality.

Any shift towards more sustainable consumption and production has to be underpinned by an active involvement of workers and social partners in order to facilitate the necessary changes, including at workplace level. At the EU level, social dialogue is well established and has been strengthened over the years. Social dialogue plays a particularly important and constructive part in managing change through the involvement of all relevant actors.

Finland: National Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production

The Finnish government appointed a committee in November 2003 with members drawn from a wide range of stakeholder groups and organisations to draft proposals for a National Programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production. The programme is to define the additional goals and environmental policy measures that will have to be adopted for Finland to become a truly eco-efficient society. The committee is due to work out the National Programme by the end of May 2005.

Furthermore, the Aarhus Convention provides citizens with access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters. Since signing the Convention in 1998 the EU has taken important steps to update existing legal provisions in order to meet the requirements of the Aarhus Convention by means of legislation directed at the Member States, but also for its own institutions. In particular, two directives concerning access to environmental information and public participation in environmental decision-making ('first' and 'second pillar' of the Aarhus Convention) were adopted by the European Parliament and the Council earlier in 2003. They have to be implemented in national law by 2005.

The achievement of sustainable consumption and production needs a mixture of different policies and tools. Action needs to be taken at all levels of government but also by all key stakeholders — notably the business sector, research institutions, and non-governmental organisations such as consumer organisations.

Hungary: Network for Sustainable Consumption and Production

The Hungarian Network for Sustainable Consumption and Production is a cross-sectoral partnership composed of a unique assemblage of stakeholder groups in central and eastern Europe. The partnership emerged from the initiative of UNEP with strong support from the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe's (REC) Hungarian country office. The Network was launched in November 2002.

The main tasks of the Network are to promote dialogue among stakeholders and to develop and implement the strategies and actions for sustainable consumption and production. The Network was further extended during several cross- and intra-sector events. The efficiency of the Network's actions is ensured by the participants covering all stakeholder groups (relevant governmental authorities, business, civil society, academia and media). Website: www.rec.hu/hfff

2.2. Thematic strategies

Thematic Strategy on the sustainable use of natural resources

All economic and social development depends on supplies of natural resources, while at the same time exert pressure on those resources through emissions and waste. Due to the pervasive demand for natural resources, many different policies affect their use and associated environmental impacts. These include economic policy, fiscal policy, agricultural policy, energy policy, trade and transport policy. However, these policies are not coordinated towards coherent goals regarding the quantities used, or regarding the environmental impacts generated.

The Thematic Strategy on the sustainable use of natural resources ⁽¹⁾ will tackle resources use in a fully comprehensive way. It will strive to develop commonly accepted goals and support the implementation of policies to achieve them. A Commission Communication on the outline of the Strategy — 'Towards a Thematic Strategy on the sustainable use of natural resources' — was adopted in October 2003 (COM(2003)572) ⁽²⁾. The final Strategy will be developed in an open and collaborative process involving stakeholders and will be adopted in 2005. It will have a time-scale of 25 years.

Austria: Eco-efficiency Action Programme

The Eco-efficiency Action Programme represents a bundle of measures that are dedicated to the improvement of resource productivity, i.e. using fewer natural resources per unit of consumption. By 2050, consumption of non-renewable resources and energy sources is to be reduced by one tenth of present consumption while maintaining the same quality of living. Implementation is undertaken by a number of ministries as well as the Federation of Austrian Industry and the Standing Committee of the Presidents of the Austrian Chambers of Agriculture.

The programme consists of, for example:

- regional cleaner production programmes and eco management <http://www.cpc.at>; <http://www.emas.gv.at>;
- eco-efficiency clearing house project <http://www.effizienzboerse.at>;
- green procurement;
- eco-efficiency strategies in companies.

⁽¹⁾ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/natres/>

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2003/com2003_0572en01.pdf

The overarching goal of the Strategy is to de-couple environmental impacts associated with the use of natural resources from economic growth, in support of sustainable development. To achieve this, the Strategy is likely to provide a framework and measures that allow resources to be used in a sustainable way without further harming the environment. It is likely to be based on three core tasks: gathering and keeping up-to-date information; assessing policies that directly or indirectly affect resources; and identifying appropriate measures, which will primarily be integrated into other policies.

Thematic Strategy on the urban environment

Most European citizens live in cities, and it is here that the effects of many environmental problems are concentrated, and also where an essential part of the environmental policy is to be implemented. Sustainable urban development has been promoted for years by Local Agenda 21.

The Thematic Strategy on the urban environment ⁽¹⁾ will take forward this process; it will aim at improving the quality of the urban environment for citizens, and improving the environmental performance of cities on the wider environment.

The Strategy will address cross-cutting themes such as environmental management, sustainable urban transport, sustainable construction and sustainable urban design. Within these themes the following issues will be dealt with: energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, water use and treatment, waste, noise, air quality, nature and biodiversity, transport and mobility, natural and man-made risks, health and quality of life as a whole. Issues linked directly to SCP include: promotion of change of transport patterns/choice of transport mode, development of methodology for sustainable performance of buildings/choice of sustainable building products.

For the Thematic Strategy on the prevention and recycling of waste and other thematic strategies, see below.

2.3. Integrated Product Policy (IPP)

Existing environmental product-related policies have tended to focus on large point sources of pollution. Integrated Product Policy is supplementing this approach by focusing on products and how they contribute to environmental degradation at the various stages of their life cycles. IPP aims at enhanced coherence in the application of various product policies with the aim of reducing the environmental impacts of products. A Commission Communication on integrated product policy (COM(2003) 302 final) ⁽²⁾ was adopted in June 2003.

IPP seeks to reduce the environmental impact of consumption. Realising that environmental performance can be a factor giving companies or their products a competitive edge, it attempts to create the right framework conditions for a market that favours environmentally friendlier products. IPP is based on four principles:

- ‘life-cycle thinking’, which means that when pollution-reduction measures are identified, consideration is given to the whole of a product’s life-cycle, from cradle to grave;

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/urban/thematic_strategy.htm

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2003/com2003_0302en01.pdf

- flexibility about the type of policy measure to be used, working with the market where possible. Many different policy measures influence the environmental impacts of products but with so many different products it makes no sense to prefer any one type of instrument;
- full stakeholder involvement. The environmental impacts of products are affected by the actions of many different stakeholders, such as designers, industry, marketing people, retailers and consumers. Reducing these impacts requires all stakeholders to take action in their sphere of influence;
- not setting final targets to be reached but rather stimulating a 'philosophy' of continuous improvement where every product generation should be more environmentally friendly than its predecessors.

United Kingdom: Market Transformation Programme (MTP)

The MTP aims to encourage products, systems and services that do less harm to the environment using less energy, water and other resources over their lifetime.

It provides strategic support to a growing set of 'product' policies. These aim to encourage resource efficiency through the development of supply-chain measures such as reliable product information, raising minimum standards and encouraging best practice and, where consensus and joined-up thinking are essential, to establish priorities and to deliver practical policies.

The MTP also makes extensive use of public domain, consultative sector review processes to engage industry and other stakeholders at all levels. It is primarily focused on climate change and sustainable energy issues. However, it also supports a broader environmental agenda, in particular the eco-label.

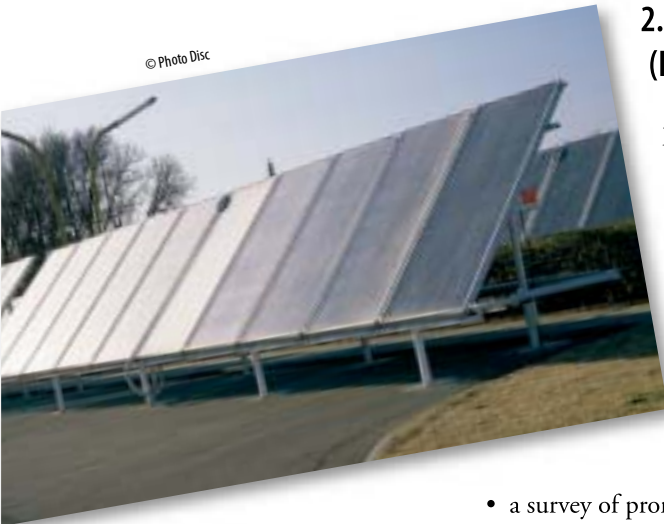
<http://www.mtprog.com/>

The Commission will implement IPP through a two-pronged approach:

- improving the tools that already exist to make them more product-focused. These tools, known as the IPP toolbox, can be used on many different products. IPP will also improve coordination between the different instruments to better exploit their synergies;
- taking action to improve the environmental performance of products that have the greatest potential for improvement.

This includes the following concrete actions:

- in June 2004, the launching of two pilot projects on mobile phones and wooden garden furniture on the basis of stakeholder suggestions to the Commission;
- in 2005, on the basis of stakeholder dialogue, the publication of a practical handbook on best practice with life-cycle assessment, LCA;
- in 2005, a discussion document on the need for product design obligations on producers;
- in 2005, the Commission will decide whether to take any Community action to stimulate the development of Environmental Product Declarations;
- in 2006, the development of a Commission action programme for greening its procurement;
- in 2007, the identification of a first set of products with the greatest potential for environmental improvement and the beginning of action to tackle them.



2.4. Environmental Technology Action Plan (ETAP)

Environmental technologies constitute an important bridge between the Lisbon Strategy and sustainable development, having the potential to contribute to growth while at the same time improving the environment and protecting natural resources. The objective is to support innovation in, and the development and use of, environmental technologies.

The Environmental Technology Action Plan (ETAP) was adopted in January 2004 (COM (2004) 38) ⁽¹⁾. It consists of:

- a survey of promising technologies that could address the main environmental problems;
- an identification, with stakeholders, of the market and institutional barriers that are holding back development and use of specific technologies;
- an identification of a targeted package of measures, building on existing instruments, to address these barriers.

The Commission has begun implementing this action plan, through, for instance, the establishment of technology platforms and of networks of technology validation centres. The Commission will review the implementation of the action plan and report on it for the first time in 2006. It will also establish a European Panel on Environmental Technologies to bring together the different European stakeholders in this action plan.

2.5. Consumer policies

According to the EU Consumer Policy Strategy 2002–06 (COM (2002) 208 final) ⁽²⁾, EU consumer policy provides essential health and safety requirements and safeguards economic interests to ensure a high level of protection and meet the expectations of citizens throughout the EU. Products, notably food products, and services placed on the market should be safe and consumers should receive the relevant information to make appropriate choices. Much of the work in this domain concerns legislation and other actions having a direct impact on market behaviour, such as standardisation and codes of conduct of best practice. Consumers should have the capacity to promote their interests in order to be on the same footing as other civil society stakeholders represented at the EU level.

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2004/com2004_0038en01.pdf

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/consumers/publications/pub09_en.pdf

Hungary: Network of eco-counselling offices

The offices of the Network of Environmental Consultants are operated by environmental NGOs. The Network was initiated by the Association of Environmental Consultants in 1997. The establishment, and to some extent the operation, was financed by the Ministry of Environment. The Network works in cooperation with the Information Office of the Ministry and provides information supporting an environmentally-aware lifestyle.

Website: <http://www.kothalo.hu/english/index.htm>

Main activities of the Network:

- operating, developing the network of eco-counselling offices
- running a coordination office
- publishing brochures, booklets
- organising training for the eco-counsellors on specific topics, such as waste management, air protection, communication skills, etc.
- cooperating with Eco-counselling Europe on specific projects, such as solar energy in Hungary, experience exchanges, etc.

One of the three key objectives of the Strategy is to further involve consumer organisations in EU policies. In order for consumer protection policies to be effective, consumers themselves must have an opportunity to provide an input into the development of policies that affect them. This goes beyond the immediate scope of consumer policy as such, and is essential to achieve the integration of consumer protection requirements into all other EU policies. The main actions consist of the review of mechanisms for participation of consumer organisations in all areas of EU policy making and in the setting up of capacity-building projects so that consumer organisations can participate and be effective in the various Community policies of interest to them.

2.6. Corporate social responsibility (CSR)

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is 'a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis'. This is how the Commission defined the concept in its 2002 Communication 'Corporate social responsibility: a business contribution to sustainable development' ⁽¹⁾ which followed on from the 2001 Green Paper 'Promoting a European framework for CSR' ⁽²⁾. The Communication sets out a Commission strategy to foster corporate social responsibility (CSR) and set up a European Multi-Stakeholder Forum on CSR in October 2002, bringing together the main stakeholder groups — business, trade unions and civil society organisations — at European level ⁽³⁾. With the overall aim to promote innovation, transparency and convergence of CSR practices and instruments, the Forum adopted a two-fold objective of (i) improving knowledge about the relationship between CSR and sustainable development by facilitating the exchange of experience and good practices and (ii) exploring the appropriateness of establishing common guiding principles on CSR.

In June 2004, the Forum presented its conclusions and recommendations to the European Commission in the form of a final Forum report ⁽⁴⁾ which is based upon the discussions which took place in four theme-based round tables on knowledge, SMEs, transparency and development aspects. The recommendations are addressed to all stakeholder groups, including public authorities and the EU, and are structured around the themes of: awareness-raising and improv-

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/soc-dial/csr/csr2002_en.pdf

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/soc-dial/csr/greenpaper_en.pdf

⁽³⁾ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/csr/index.htm>

⁽⁴⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/csr/index_forum.htm

ing knowledge, building competencies to mainstream CSR and ensuring an enabling environment. The Commission plans to issue a new Communication on CSR, taking into account the Forum's work, by the end of 2004.

France: Law on New Economic Regulation

The Law on New Economic Regulation, which was introduced on 20 February 2002, compels companies that are quoted on the Stock Exchange to report on their actions in the social and environmental fields. The required information falls into three categories: social information (training, hygiene, safety, parity, etc.), the territorial impact of the activity (subsidiary companies, subcontractors etc.), and the third covering the environment (28 headings in total). Several rating companies have now emerged on this new market. Further details:

<http://www.novethic.fr/novethic/site/article/index.jsp?id=74593>

In line with the Forum's recommendations, the Commission launched a pan-European Awareness-raising Campaign on CSR ⁽¹⁾ in October 2004. The campaign will comprise around 65 national events across the 25 EU Member States, candidate countries and Norway to be held between September 2004 and June 2005. It is targeted specifically at SMEs and a toolkit has been designed to raise their awareness about the possible business benefits of CSR. The campaign draws on a previous Commission project on CSR and SMEs, which brought together a collection of 25 SME good practices from across Europe in a brochure entitled 'Responsible Entrepreneurship' ⁽²⁾.

Netherlands: Corporate Social Responsibility Policy

To facilitate and actively promote CSR, the Dutch government follows a general policy based on a report by the Social and Economic Council, 'Corporate Social Responsibility: a Dutch approach' (see www.ser.nl, advisory reports 2000). The government acts as an agent of change, bringing different parties together and inviting them to engage in innovative cooperation. The 12 provinces and the municipalities are partners in this approach. Activities include:

- the development of a national CSR knowledge centre;
- financial support of a CSR university research programme;
- stimulating partnerships;
- improving the role of NGOs in the CSR debate;
- improving the quality of annual (sustainable) reporting;
- support for the development of CSR tools.

⁽¹⁾ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/csr/calls/.htm>

⁽²⁾ The brochure is available in 14 languages and can be downloaded at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/entrepreneurship/support_measures/responsible_entrepreneurship/index.htm

2.7. Public procurement policies

The Commission has adopted two interpretative Communications on the possibilities for integrating environmental and social considerations into public procurement.

(i) Commission interpretative Communication on the Community law applicable to public procurement and the possibilities for integrating environmental considerations into public procurement (2001) ⁽¹⁾

The objective of the Communication is to examine and clarify the possibilities offered by the existing public procurement regime in order to enable the optimum consideration of environmental protection in public procurement. The Communication follows different phases of a contract award procedure and examines at each stage how environmental concerns may be addressed.

The Commission has also published a 'Handbook on Green Procurement' which elaborates the possibilities presented in the abovementioned Communication. It will demonstrate to public procurement practitioners, by means of concrete examples, how to adopt environmental consideration into procurement procedures. In addition to the handbook, the Commission has also developed a product group database and a 'Greening public procurement' website ⁽²⁾.

Netherlands: Green Public Procurement

In the last five years, the Netherlands has stimulated authorities to focus on greener public procurement with a national programme on GPP. Many authorities nowadays have experience with GPP. But GPP is still not internalised by most parties who expressed their intentions to perform on GPP. For the near future, the programme will gain the commitment of authorities to focus their efforts on achieving a set of commonly agreed operational goals for GPP. In these efforts, a triple P approach (people, planet, profit) will be used for specified product groups and services. GPP as an instrument is incorporated into the Dutch National Strategy for Sustainable Development, and will therefore be monitored on a regular basis.

(ii) Interpretative Communication of the Commission on the Community law applicable to public procurement and the possibilities for integrating social considerations into public procurement (2001) ⁽¹⁾

Internal market policy, such as public procurement, can be pursued while at the same time integrating pursuit of other objectives, including social policy objectives. Sustainable development combines economic growth, social progress and respect for the environment.

The Communication has a similar approach to the abovementioned Communication on environmental considerations of identifying the possibilities under existing Community law applicable to public procurement for taking social considerations into account in the best way in public procurement. The Communication examines the different phases of a procurement procedure and sets out, for each phase, whether and to what extent social considerations can be taken into account.

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/en/publproc/general/com274en.pdf

⁽²⁾ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/gpp/> also containing the handbook.

In March 2004, the Council and the European Parliament adopted new public procurement Directives. These Directives clarify the possibilities of contracting authorities to take into account environmental considerations in the framework of public procurement and thereby contribute to the protection of the environment ⁽¹⁾.

2.8. Economic instruments

General

The Sixth Community Environment Action Programme (6EAP) ⁽²⁾ encourages the use of market-based instruments, such as taxes or tradable permits, in order to support sustainable production and consumption patterns. Concerning environmentally related taxes, energy taxes form by far the biggest part of such taxes in Member States. As they can also have a strong impact on the internal market, it is in this area that an EU framework has been pursued.

Austria: Sustainable pricing

The Forschungsgemeinschaft Menschen für Solidarität, Ökologie und Lebensstil (Research Community People for Solidarity, Ecology and Living Standards) has launched the 'futuro' (sustainable pricing) project.

The aim of the futuro project is to label products by using 'sustainable prices' that are expressed in a virtual currency called 'futuro'. The euro expresses the market price of a good, whereas the futuro represents a virtual mark-up obtained through consideration of ecological and social criteria for sustainability. The less sustainable a good, the higher the futuro price. Sustainability of a product is being assessed by using scientifically measured values on the one hand (such as CO₂ emissions of products and transport, land take of agrarian products, etc.). On the other hand, consumers assign the relative weighting to these measured values through their individual preferences as indicated in surveys.

<http://www.futuro-preise.at>

The Commission is currently working on a Communication on Member States' use of market-based instruments in environmental policy in the context of relevant Community legislation. The aim of the Communication is to provide an up-to-date presentation of Community legislation on market-based instruments (focusing on energy taxation, greenhouse gas emissions trading and environmental State aid), the inter-linkages between the various instruments, their impact on the behaviour of economic agents and on the scope for Member States' actions within the Community.

Ireland: Plastic Bags Levy

It is estimated that the introduction of a 15-cent environmental levy on plastic bags has reduced our consumption of these bags by about 92%. In addition, its effect on visible litter arisings has been reduced from 5% of visible litter to 0.3%. Receipts from the levy are ring-fenced into an Environment Fund, and during 2003 these amounted to over € 12.7 million. Levy proceeds are used to support waste management and other environmental initiatives. The levy has been very effective as an awareness raising initiative. An Attitudes and Actions Survey in 2003 (A National Survey on the Environment) indicated that reusable shopping bags are now being used by 90% of shoppers.

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/archive/2004/l_13420040430en.html

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/2002/l_242/l_24220020910en00010015.pdf

The upcoming Communication represents an update and extension of the Commission Communication of 1997 on 'Environmental taxes and charges in the single market' ⁽¹⁾. Since then, Member States have gained more and more experience with the use of economic instruments. Furthermore, significant progress has been made in the Community policy framework and its implementation.

Denmark: Environmental taxes

At present environmental taxes account for about 10 % of the total Danish tax revenue. Well over half of that 10 % is derived from the energy sector and a third comes from transport. The rest is from waste and wastewater, various chemicals and other items.

Example: Water consumption by households fell by more than one quarter in the period 1989-2001. During the same period of time the price of water rose by 150 %. The price of water is composed of a water supply tax (41 %), VAT (20 %), variable water taxes (12 %), green taxes, (14 %), variable taxes (9 %) fixed wastewater charge (2 %) and a State wastewater tax (2 %).

http://www.mst.dk/udgiv/Publications/2003/87-7972-852-9/html/default_eng.htm and
http://www.mst.dk/udgiv/publications/2004/87-7614-380-5/html/default_eng.ht

Environmentally-related taxes

The Commission's 1997 proposal for a 'Framework Directive to restructure and harmonise the Member States' national systems of energy taxation' ⁽²⁾ was adopted in October 2003. The new Directive will lead to an increase in existing Community minimum tax rates on mineral oil products and a widening of the scope of the EU system of excise taxation beyond mineral oils to include competing sources of energy. It will thus help in reducing emissions and provide stronger incentives for producers to develop more energy-efficient products and for consumers to adapt their habits.

In 2002, the Commission made a proposal for a further harmonisation of the taxation of motor fuels ⁽³⁾. Over time, the proposal would lead to a unified tax rate on diesel for heavier trucks and would equalise minimum tax rates for petrol and diesel for other vehicles. In July 2003, a further Commission proposal was made on infrastructure charging for road transport ⁽⁴⁾.

Apart from the area of energy taxation, the Directive on Packaging Waste ⁽⁵⁾ foresees that the Council could adopt economic instruments to further the implementation. As no such measures have been adopted so far at EU level, individual Member States may adopt their own measures in accordance with the Treaty obligations.

In the context of the Water Framework Directive ⁽⁶⁾, Member States shall introduce water-pricing policies by 2010 which provide adequate incentives for efficient water use. The objective here is to make users bear the costs (including external environmental costs) of implementing the polluter pays principle. All categories of users (industry, households, agriculture) will make their contribution. There is also an obligation for Member States to report on the measures taken within their river-basin management plans.

⁽¹⁾ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/docum/979en.pdf>

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu.int/smartapi/cgi/sga_doc?smartapi!celexplus!prod!DocNumber&type_doc=COMfinal&an_doc=1997&nu_doc=0030&lg=EN

⁽³⁾ <http://www.europarl.eu.int/meetdocs/committees/econ/20030616/com030-2en.pdf>

⁽⁴⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/transport/infr-charging/library/dir_com_2003_448_en.pdf

⁽⁵⁾ <http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/l21207.htm>

⁽⁶⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/water/water-framework/index_en.html

Greece: Environmental taxes

Greece applies a policy of differentiated excise duties on mineral oils, with exemptions on RES and bio-fuels. Around € 92 million per year, equal to 5 to 7 % of the total revenue collected from motor fuel taxation (€ 0.015 per litre) is channeled to the Ministry of the Environment for environmental purposes. Moreover, fiscal incentives are applied for the construction of natural gas co-generation plants, and for the introduction of natural gas in operating units of the secondary sector, subsidised by national and EU funds.

Some 75 % of the purchase and installation costs of domestic natural gas equipment is deductible from the taxable income of natural and legal persons whereas gas is exempted from excise tax up to 2010 and bears a decreased VAT rate (8 %). Price disincentives succeeded in substantially curbing excessive water waste in the Athens area in the early 1990s, when a system of scale charges for big consumers was introduced.

State aid for environmental purposes

State aid is a form of State intervention used to promote a certain economic activity. Their selective character distinguishes State aid measures from general economic support measures.

Under Article 6 of the Treaty, environmental policy objectives must be integrated into the Commission's policy on control of State aid in the environmental sector, in particular, with a view to promoting sustainable development. When evaluating State aid cases the Commission gives consideration to the polluter-pays-principle and whether environmental protection and sustainable development are furthered. However, disproportionate effects on competition and economic growth need to be avoided. Public support in the field of environment is justified by the recognised failure of the market to take external costs of pollution or external benefits of environmental activities into account.

The Community guidelines on State aid for environmental protection ⁽¹⁾ (first adopted in 1994) help Member States and enterprises to familiarise themselves with the criteria that the Commission applies when deciding if State aid measures are compatible with the common market.

Ireland: Environmentally superior products (ESP) initiative

ESP was developed in response to the increasing drivers for industry to produce more sustainable products and services, for example, the IPP and producer responsibility laws. ESP aims to increase the development of sustainable products, services or product service systems (PSS) by Irish industry. Under ESP, a package of supports to include information and advice on designing more sustainable products and services as well as financial supports are available. To date, over 40 Irish SMEs from a range of industry sectors have participated in ESP with sustainability and other business benefits resulting. For further information on ESP and case examples of projects see www.enterprise-ireland.com/esp.

The guidelines thus aim at striking a balance between the need to ensure that distortions of competition are kept to the minimum and, on the other hand, that the Community's environmental protection objectives are furthered.

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.eel.nl/docs/Guidelines%20on%20state%20aid.pdf>

Sweden: Local investment programmes (LIPs)

A local investment programme is aimed at increasing ecological sustainability and decided by the municipality. The selection of projects focuses on areas where the environmental load of the municipality is greatest. In addition to reducing environmental impact, these programmes are intended to: stimulate employment; make more efficient use of energy and other resources; extend the reuse and recycling of waste materials, strengthen biological diversity, conserve cultural heritage assets and improve the cycling of plant nutrients through an eco-cycle.

Work with local investment programmes took place between 1998 and 2003. The funds available for LIP during this period add up to € 0.69 billion. By 30 June 2002, a total of 210 programmes had been awarded grants of approximately € 0.66 billion. This means that more than 1 800 projects have been supported. The total investment volume for these programmes amounts to just under € 2.87 billion.

<http://www.naturvardsverket.se/dokument/hallbar/invprog/lip/pdf/lip04.pdf>

In 2001, the Commission adopted the new guidelines ⁽¹⁾, which will expire at the end of 2007. The Commission has the option to amend them before that date on the basis of competition or environmental policy considerations. The present guidelines also contain specific provisions, mainly in the field of energy. Energy-saving investments, investments in CHP plants or in renewable energy, for example, can under certain conditions be aided with an intensity of up to 40 %, which exceeds the normal aid intensities allowed for projects. Yet higher aid intensities are allowed in assisted areas under regional policy objectives and for SMEs. In the energy-saving field, it is also possible to grant operating aid.

Emissions Trading Scheme

In order to meet the objectives of the Kyoto Protocol the EU has decided to introduce an internal Emissions Trading Scheme ⁽²⁾ from 2005 onward, which limits carbon dioxide emissions from a broad range of industries, such as power generation, covering approximately 45 % of the EU's CO₂ emissions, and places them within a regulatory framework. The large carbon dioxide emitters will be allocated allowances on an annual basis through national allocation plans, and they are required to match/keep their emissions with their holdings in the limits set by the allowances. If they reduce emissions to a level below their limits, they can sell the excess allowances to other companies or keep them for future use. Vice versa, companies that exceed their limits can invest in abatement technology or buy allowances on the market to match their emissions, whichever is the cheaper. In this way, the EU scheme will allow the required emissions reductions to take place at minimum cost to the economy.

The Linking Directive ⁽³⁾ is an amendment to the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS). 'Linking' means that joint implementation/clean development mechanism credits under the Kyoto Protocol can be used by EU operators to fulfil their obligations under the EU ETS.

It implies the recognition of JI/CDM credits as equivalent to allowances under the EU ETS from an environmental and economic point of view. The linking Directive is promoting the creation of JI and CDM credits and has the following advantages:

⁽¹⁾ Community guidelines on State aid for environmental protection, OJ C 37, 3.2.2001.

<http://www.eel.nl/docs/Guidelines%20on%20state%20aid.pdf>

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/2003/l_275/l_27520031025en00320046.pdf

⁽³⁾ http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/climat/emission/linking_en.htm

1. For credit generators:
 - increase of compliance options for entities;
 - reduction in allowance price and compliance costs;
 - increase liquidity of the EU emissions trading market.
2. For host countries:
 - stimulate demand for JI/CDM credits;
 - contribution to host countries' sustainable development;
 - promotion of the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to third countries;
 - drive environmental policy integration in EU external policies and contribute to the EU Sustainable Development Strategy.

Trade policies and preferential tariffs

As a vehicle for the provision of goods and services, international trade contributes to the ecological footprint of the EU over the rest of the world. At the same time, because trade can play a major role in achieving sustainable development and eradicating poverty, the WSSD made recommendations to ensure the mutual supportiveness between trade and environment, aimed notably at further integrating environmental considerations into bilateral and regional trade agreements, at supporting the development of domestic and international markets for environmentally-friendly goods and services or at further developing voluntary consumer information tools relating to sustainable production and consumption.

In the context of the Doha Development Round negotiations, the EU is making several proposals of interest in the context of follow-up to the WSSD. Further integration of developmental and environmental considerations into trade are major goals of the Doha Development Agenda (DDA). On the one hand, the EU has committed itself to eliminate export subsidies for agricultural products. It is also actively participating in the negotiations of disciplines on fisheries subsidies in the WTO, in line with the common fisheries policy reform (see Section 3.4 below).

On the other hand, and apart from negotiations relating to the relationship between MEAs and WTO agreements, the EU is actively participating in the negotiations for the reduction or, as appropriate, the elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade in environmental goods and services. This should aim at supporting the dissemination of environmental technologies and services in all countries (as foreseen in ETAP), as well as fostering trade in environmentally-friendly products, including in sectors where developing countries have a comparative advantage. This should also help meet consumer demand for greener products.

Outside the scope of the DDA, the EU is also seeking to follow up on WSSD commitments, regionally and bilaterally and will also continue to actively support and participate positively in the work for sustainable trade in fora such as Unctad and UNEP.

The importance of regional and bilateral agreements has increased in recent years and the EU's efforts to enhance sustainability in regional and bilateral agreements have intensified. In this context, the EU is further refining instruments such as sustainability impact assessments (SIAs) which provide a tool for integrating sustainable development into trade policy and its implementation. SIAs are currently being carried out on trade negotiations in the WTO, but also with Mercosur, the Gulf Cooperation Council and on the EPAs in the context of the Cotonou Agreement. In addition, facilitating trade in environmental goods and services, including organic products, shall be part of this agenda.

The current generalised system of preferences (GSP) scheme includes an environmental clause by which special tariff reductions can be granted to countries implementing internationally recognised standards on sustainably managed tropical forests. The Commission has now adopted a proposal for a new GSP over the period 2006–15 and this incorporates a special incentive to encourage sustainable development and governance. Countries that have ratified and effectively implemented the main international conventions relating to human and labour rights, environmental protection and governance, including the fight against drugs, will be eligible for additional tariff concessions (GSP +).

As regards developing countries in general, the European action plan for organic food and farming stipulates that measures should be adopted to facilitate trade, and in particular market access for products of developing countries. Working towards international convergence of standards and improving EU procedures for the recognition of third countries' standards should, in the medium to long term, facilitate the import and export of organic products.

Through the OECD recommendation on common approaches on the environment and officially supported export credits, the European export credit agencies are contributing to the integration of environmental and social considerations into project financing in third countries, thereby encouraging the export of more environmentally-friendly technologies. Moreover, the EU is proposing to amend the OECD disciplines on export credits to allow for granting more favourable financing conditions for renewable energy and water-related projects: this will support international efforts to shift towards more sustainable forms of energy and to improve access to clean water and sanitation in developing countries and economies in transition.

Furthermore, the EU is refining its biodiversity strategy to contribute to the global 2010 target to significantly reduce the current rate of biodiversity loss. One of the objectives proposed by stakeholders is to promote ecologically sustainable international trade which reduces the impact of EU trade on biodiversity (Message from Malahide ⁽¹⁾). Fostering trade in products and services which contribute to biodiversity protection could also be explored in this context.

In this context, trade-related technical assistance is important to help developing countries assess the linkages between trade, the environment and development, and benefit from the trade opportunities offered by emerging markets for sustainable products, including organics. The EU support to the Sustainable Trade and Innovation Centre (STIC) as a Johannesburg type-II initiative is a contribution in this regard. Trade and environmental technical assistance is also important in helping developing countries comply with new EU environmental requirements so as to facilitate their market access within the EU, while at the same time helping them develop adequate environmental legislation at national level.

Finally, in order to contribute to a positive agenda for globalisation, finance and trade, the EU actively supports the work of the ILO on the social dimension of globalisation and in particular its 'decent work' agenda. The Commission had already outlined a comprehensive strategy for the promotion of core labour standards and improving social governance in the context of globalisation. (Commission Communication COM (2001) 416) ⁽²⁾, and has now adopted a further Communication specifically addressing the social aspects of globalisation ⁽³⁾.

⁽¹⁾ http://www.ue2004.ie/templates/meeting.asp?sNavlocator=5,418,13&list_id=193

⁽²⁾ http://trade-info.cec.eu.int/doclib/docs/2003/april/tradoc_111234.pdf

⁽³⁾ COM(2004) 383 final of 18.5.04 http://trade-info.cec.eu.int/civil_soc/documents/meeting/me-150-communication%20EN%20-%20Final.pdc.pdf

2.9. Information tools

Education, awareness raising and public information

Actions and activities in the field of environmental communication and awareness raising aim at contributing to and ensuring better and more accessible information on the environment for citizens and to raising environmental awareness of citizens. Better informed citizens can make informed choices to bring about concrete changes in their attitudes and behaviour with beneficial impact on environmental protection. The focus is on solutions to environmental problems, the concept of sustainable development and its application, putting particular emphasis on its environmental dimension and on EU actions in these areas.

The Commission issues numerous environmental publications, both in print and via the Internet, covering the main policy areas — water, air, climate change, nature and biodiversity, waste, environment and health. These deal with new legislation and new initiatives as well as the implementation of existing legislation. A more general publication ‘Environment for Europeans’⁽¹⁾ presents these activities to the public in an easy and accessible way. In addition, several video productions are made annually to inform European citizens, via the medium of TV, of key environmental policy developments and issues. The impact of the Video news releases continues to grow. These communication tools help to achieve a greater visibility for the EU’s environmental policy in a measurable way.

Malta: Eco-projects

A number of innovative actions have been carried out including a series of ‘Eco-Breakfasts’ to target key industry groups about new legislation arising from the transposition of the EU environmental *Acquis*. An *Eco Schools* project aims to empower schoolchildren to participate, act and be responsible for their school’s environment in line with Local Agenda 21 principles – search the Malta Environment and Planning Authority website www.mepa.org.mt. This website is itself innovative in presenting environment and development information using GIS-based tools, and it registered almost a quarter of a million hits between October 2002 and September 2003. The most popular searches involved development applications.

‘Green Week’⁽²⁾ is an annual event organised by the European Commission targeted at local, regional and national decision-makers, environmental stakeholders such as companies, industry associations and non-governmental organisations and social partners. It aims at stimulating participation of and action by all actors in the implementation and development of environmental legislation through better and more accessible information on the environment and joint work on solutions. In 2003, the theme of the Green Week was ‘Changing our behaviour’, with special attention paid to the WSSD commitments in the field of sustainable consumption and production.

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/news/efe/archives_en.htm

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/greenweek/index_en.htm

Italy: Network of local 'Environmental Education Centres'

A network of local 'Environmental Education Centres' has been established (INFEA), coordinated by the Ministry of the Environment and Territory and the Regions. Mainly focused on promoting public awareness, it brings together the various actors involved in activities of environmental education. The centres (about 150), some of them located within natural protected areas, are managed by local public institutions in cooperation with various stakeholders, like environmental NGOs, private enterprises, universities and research centres. They address various categories of learners of different ages. Some projects are carried out within or in collaboration with schools. www.minambiente.it/SVS/infea/infea.htm

Launched in 2002, the European Mobility Week ⁽¹⁾ builds on the success of the European Car Free Day, and aims at raising awareness of the need for more sustainable urban mobility. It focuses on the benefits of sustainable means of transport and policies that improve air quality, reduce noise and enhance people's quality of life. The theme of the 2003 event was accessibility for people with disabilities, in support of the European Year of People with Disabilities. It focused on the problems of accessibility that they encounter working and living in an urban environment. Around 500 cities from more than 20 countries took part in the event.

Poland: Educational campaign

During 2003–05, the National Energy Conservation Agency (Polish KAPE) www.kape.gov.pl, together with German partners, is running a nationwide informative-educational campaign named 'Energy Bus' www.autobus-energetyczny.pl. The bus serves as a mobile informative-educational centre and is expected to visit at least 100–150 local communities during 11 regional campaigns.

In the three past campaigns KAPE experts answered most frequently asked questions related to, for example,

- (a) water-, electricity- and gas saving methods,
- (b) operating basics and installation costs of heat pumps, solar collectors, fuel cells, photovoltaic cells, gas and biomass pots,
- (c) thermo modernisation of buildings,
- (d) financing opportunities for energy saving investments, including the use of EU funds.

Environmental-labelling

The EU eco-label ⁽²⁾, the Flower was introduced in 1992 to encourage the production of products of high environmental quality and to give consumers in Europe clear and easy guidance on greener products. Consumers choosing a product bearing the Flower logo are assured that it has a better environmental performance than similar products on the market. The Flower is awarded by an independent third party only to products that meet a set of strict environmental and performance criteria that take into account the full life-cycle of the product. Its strength is that it is recognised and managed European-wide. Between 2001 and 2003, the number of licence holders increased by 70 % and the number of articles sold rose by 350 % between 2000 and 2002.

An active programme is in place to revise and expand the range of eco-label criteria. These criteria are set with full stakeholder participation and cover over 20 different product groups, such as textiles, paints, paper products, detergents, household appliances, with several other new product groups under development. The scheme now also covers services, and criteria for the first service group — tourist accommodation services — are in place and used by accommodations in Europe. Criteria for camp sites will follow soon.

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.mobilityweek-europe.org/>

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/ecolabel/index_en.htm

Czech Republic: Eco-labelling

The National Programme of Labelling Environmentally Friendly Products in the Czech Republic, which is directed by the Minister of the Environment, was announced in April 1994.

The volume of funds expended for purchases and use of environmentally friendly products in State organisations equals approximately CZK 12 million (€ 4 million). There are innumerable eco-labelled paper products, cleaning agents, washing agents (liquid soaps), office furniture, adhesives for floor covering, water-based coatings and gas furnaces installed during reconstruction work.

The current state of Czech eco-labelling is reflected in the following results:

32 product categories, 162 valid licences for use of the Czech eco-label for specific products, 75 companies are valid holders of Czech eco-labels, more than 300 products are connected with the eco-label.

<http://www.ekoznacka.cz/eng/>

Sweden: Eco-labelling

One of the strengths of eco-labelling is its ability to communicate a complex message in a simple way. There are three main environmental labels on the Swedish market; the Nordic Swan label, the Nature Conservation Society's *Bra Miljöval* (Good environmental choice) and the KRAV label for organic food. The Swan label currently has more than 600 licences.

The credibility of the Nordic Swan label is high. Between 60 and 75 % of Swedish, Finnish and Norwegian consumers spontaneously named the label when asked if they knew any eco-labels. The justification for the credibility was that the Swan label was common, had existed for some time and that it was from the government. The label has increased environmental awareness among consumers, purchasers and companies. www.svanen.nu

Consumer information

The consumer's right to information means the right to make an informed choice of products and services. Several labelling provisions, notably for food products, have been adopted at EU level in order to provide consumers with appropriate information to help them to choose products adapted to their needs and expectations. The labelling of foodstuffs enables consumers to get comprehensive information on the contents and the composition of food products.

Current actions relating to labelling include for example:

- the recent adoption of an important amendment to the EU food labelling Directive (which ensures that consumers are informed of the complete contents of foodstuffs);
- the new and stricter EU rules on labelling meat-based products;
- the rules on health information on tobacco products;
- the recent Directives on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) which establish a clear EU system to trace and label GMOs and to regulate the placing on the market and labelling of food and feed products derived from GMOs;
- the recent proposal for the regulation of the use of health and nutrition claims.



The European Pollutant Emissions Register

The European Pollutant Emissions Register (EPER) ⁽¹⁾ was launched in February 2004. The objectives of the register are the collection, storage and dissemination of emission data from industrial and agricultural facilities. EPER now includes emission data from about 10 000 facilities. EPER will help to improve public awareness of pollutant emissions and enhance transparency and comparability.

2.10. Analytical tools

Indicators

The Commission is currently developing a comprehensive set of indicators in order to provide the EU Sustainable Development Strategy ⁽²⁾ with regular structured information about progress on sustainable development objectives. A task force has created a policy-based indicator framework which consists of 10 main themes including sustainable consumption and production. Additional themes and sub-themes may be added when the SDS will be reviewed in 2004/05. A second objective of the task force is to identify if there are any areas where future data collection would be necessary. The task force is expected to report in 2004.

Spain: Spanish system of environmental indicators

The Ministry of the Environment has been working on creating and improving a Spanish system of environmental indicators since 1996. A new phase started recently, in which a system of environmental indicators by sectors of activity is being developed. This kind of analysis has started with the tourist sector (published in 2003). The Ministry of the Environment published 'The Spanish system of environmental indicators for tourism' in 2003. More information on www.mma.es

In several sectors (such as agriculture and transport), environment-related indicators are being developed. The objective is to monitor and assess the integration of environmental concerns into sectoral policies, as required under the Cardiff Process.

Reporting mechanisms

All dimensions of sustainable development (the Lisbon Process and the EU's Sustainable Development Strategy) are reviewed annually by the Heads of State or Government at the spring European Council. The review is based on a Spring Report by the Commission, which is based on the use of a list of structural indicators. This annual review is complemented by a more comprehensive review of the EU's Sustainable Development Strategy at the beginning of each Commission's term of office (see general policy framework). The first such comprehensive review of the Strategy will take place in 2004/05.

Report on sustainable household consumption in Europe

As a contribution to its next European 'State of the environment and outlook' report, the European Environment Agency (EEA) is preparing a report on sustainable household consump-

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.eper.cec.eu.int/>

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2001/com2001_0264en01.pdf

tion in Europe, due in 2005. This will make an integrated assessment of past trends (from 1990) and future outlooks (to 2020 and 2030) for European household consumption and its effects on the environment.

The report will analyse the driving forces and policies that can explain changes in household consumption and its environmental effects. It will assess the past trends and future outlooks related to consumption and its environmental effects for the main household consumption activities: the consumption of food and beverages; consumption related to housing activities; household mobility and transport; and household recreation and tourism.

2.11. Research and development

The Sixth EU Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development

Research and development plays an important part in promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns and eco-efficiency. The previous European research programmes have already been tackling issues concerning sustainable industrial production, looking more specifically at minimising consumption of natural resources and energy, minimising waste production and changing production and consumption patterns.

The current Sixth EU Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (2002–06, FP6) ⁽¹⁾ offers technological responses to strengthen the environmental pillar of sustainable development and changing industrial approaches in the context of sustainable production. Periodic calls for proposals are organised in order to build on an array of instruments (integrated projects, networks of excellence, coordination actions and specific support actions).

Finland: The Environmental Cluster Research Programme

The Finnish Environmental Cluster Research Programme is a collaborative Programme between researchers, the business sector, public authorities and funding organisations. Eco-efficiency is identified as the underlying theme. The third stage of the Programme (2003–05) concentrates on the eco-efficient society. One of the priority areas is production and consumption and it covers eco-efficient production and consumer behaviour, lifestyles and social sustainability. The Programme covers around 22 different projects totalling around € 3 million.

The nanotechnology, material and production (NMP) ⁽²⁾ priority is focusing on medium- and long-term research activities in order to modernise industry and prepare the ground for a transition towards a knowledge-based society and sustainable development. It covers issues that are relevant to research needs in the field of SCP. Relevant examples of selected projects in 2003 are:

- Sustainpack: innovation and sustainable development in the fibre-based packaging value chain;
- Ecotarget: new and innovative processes for radical changes of the European pulp and paper industry;
- Manvis: a foresight vision on the future of the manufacturing industry;
- Leapfrog: coordination of stakeholders for changing production patterns in the European garment industry.

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/index_en.html

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/p3/firstcallresult_en.html

A budget of approximately € 100 million is available in 2004 to finance projects in the SPC field, with an emphasis on helping SMEs.

The sustainable development, global change and ecosystems ⁽¹⁾ priority area of FP6 focuses on similar activities in the areas of energy, transport and water. Examples include:

- Moses: replacing car ownership by 'car sharing' — rational car use;
- Toolsust: involvement of stakeholders to develop and implement tools for sustainable households (the project analysed, in different European cities, the consumption behaviours and assessed the impacts of these behaviours before suggesting possible short and longer term measures);
- Homeservice: possibilities to replace goods consumption by the provision of services directly delivered at home (so-called dematerialisation)

Research under FP6 contributes also to expanding the knowledge base and to playing a key role in education, training schemes and technology transfer. It also promotes increased coordination of national research programmes: as an example, a project called 'Susprise' aims at the coordination of national programmes in the field of sustainable enterprises. It is highly relevant for environmental technologies and scheduled to start at the beginning of 2004.

The action plan 'Investing in Research — towards 3 % of GDP' (2003) ⁽²⁾ can also play an important role by attracting private investment into environmental technologies, highlighting the need for Technology Platforms. The platforms aiming at the long-term vision should be supported by sectoral voluntary actions. Examples of Technology Platforms (whose main feature is stated as sustainability) include: Plant genomics & biotechnology, Water supply & sanitation; Photovoltaics; Sustainable chemistry; Sustainable benefits from renewable forestry resources, and Global livestock development.

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/p6/index_en.html

⁽²⁾ <http://www.e-core.org/content/workshops/nov03/3%25.pdf>

3. Sectors and issues

3.1. Industry/cleaner production

Regulatory framework on air and water pollution

EU policy on air quality aims to develop and implement appropriate instruments to improve air quality. The control of emissions from mobile sources, improving fuel quality and promoting and integrating environmental requirements into the transport and energy sectors are part of these aims. The Community is acting at many levels to reduce exposure to air pollution: through legislation, through work at the wider international level to tackle cross-border air pollution and through working with sectors responsible for air pollution. The focus for the next 10 years will be implementation of air quality standards and coherence of all air legislation and related policy initiatives (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/air/index.htm>).

The EU Water Framework Directive (2000) ⁽¹⁾ establishes the Community framework for action in the field of water management. It sets objectives to ensure that all waters meet 'good status' by 2015. It sets up a system of management within river basins that recognises that water systems do not stop at geographical or political borders. The Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (1991) ⁽²⁾ aims at protecting the environment from the adverse effects of discharges of urban waste and of wastewater from industrial sectors of agro-food industry.

Lithuania: Wastewater

Water pollution has been reduced considerably from 1991 to 2002. The amount of wastewater during this period decreased from 300 to 160 million cubic metres per year. During this period too the level of wastewater treatment changed significantly. Quality started to improve considerably from 1996 when biological water treatment facilities were established in Vilnius and water treatment facilities in some smaller towns were reconstructed or constructed. Water consumption in the household sector was also reduced by almost four times during 1991–2002, mainly because of sharply increased prices and the introduction of an accounting system. Daily consumption of water per person decreased from approximately 280 litres in 1991 to 70–90 litres currently.

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Integrated pollution prevention and control (IPPC)

The EU has set up a set of common rules to promote sustainable production in large industrial installations. These rules are set out in the Directive on Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control (IPPC, 1996) ⁽³⁾. The purpose is to achieve integrated prevention and control of pollution arising from certain large scale industrial and agricultural activities. The whole environmental performance of the plants are taken into account, that is, emissions to air, water and soil, generation of waste, use of raw materials, energy efficiency, noise, prevention of accidents, risk management, etc. By 2006, all existing IPPC installations have to fully comply with the requirements

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/water/water-framework/index_en.html

⁽²⁾ <http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/l28008.htm>

⁽³⁾ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/ippc/>

of the Directive, in particular by operating on a permit based on Best Available Techniques and delivered by the competent authorities of the Member States. The system has already been required for new installations since 1999.

To support implementation, so-called BREFs (BAT reference documents) in some 30 sectors are elaborated by the European IPPC bureau which is part of the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies at the Commission's Joint Research Centre with the collaboration of experts from Member States and stakeholders in order to assist in identification of the Best Available Technologies (BAT) for the sector and determination of appropriate permit conditions. Important examples of BREFs include:

- pulp and paper manufacture;
- iron and steel production;
- textile processing;
- mineral oil refineries;
- intensive livestock farming.

Product standards

Because standards define how a product is made, used, maintained and treated at the end of its life, they can have a substantial influence on the way products impact on the environment. This issue was developed in a Communication on the Integration of Environmental Aspects into European standardisation adopted by the Commission in February 2004 COM(2004) 130 final ⁽¹⁾.

The key issues include general awareness-raising amongst experts involved in the elaboration of standards and ensuring a wider participation of stakeholders.

Belgium: Framework Law on Product Standards

The federal government adopted a framework law in 1998 on product standards, with the aim of promoting sustainable production and consumption patterns. The overall objective is that all products which are placed on the market must be conceived in such a way that their manufacture, intended use and disposal do not adversely affect public health and do not contribute, or contribute as little as possible, to an increase in the amount and degree of the harmfulness of waste and to other forms of pollution. Some of these standards are derived from European law or from international environmental conventions, others of these standards are federal initiatives regulating products. For example, such regulations were developed on the composition of fuels, packaging, washing products, etc.

ECOS, a consortium of environmental NGOs has been awarded a service contract to contribute to the integration of environmental aspects into standardisation.

Voluntary initiatives and codes of conduct

The Commission issued a Communication on Environmental Agreements at Community level in July 2002. It details the criteria and the procedural rules to be respected when this instrument is to be used as a Community policy instrument.

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/standards_policy/environment_standardisation/

Malta: Cleaner Technology Centre

The Cleaner Technology Centre was established by the Government of Malta in 1993 to make better use of the limited intellectual and financial resources available within a small country. The aim is to facilitate joint initiatives between the government, industry and the university in order to:

- (a) encourage industry to apply the least polluting technologies;
- (b) transfer know-how to industry about the implementation of cleaner technology;
- (c) offer assistance to find feasible solutions with regard to pollution prevention;
- (d) become involved in any initiative leading to cleaner technology;
- (e) pursue any other objectives which both parties may consent to include.

More information can be obtained from ctc@mus.com.mt

Currently the Commission is also elaborating a framework strategy to stimulate voluntary actions by business with regard to sustainable production.

Biotechnology

The Commission has an Integrated Strategy for Europe on Life Sciences and Biotechnology ⁽¹⁾, which was launched in 2002 and consists of two parts: policy orientations and an action plan.

Biotechnology is not only one of the main innovative technologies in the 21st century, but also holds the potential to make a major contribution to sustainability, provided that potential risks are properly managed. There are two main ways in which biotechnology innovations can help environmental sustainability: through substitution (and/or more efficient use) of non-renewable inputs and through less generation of wasteful by-products. In terms of economic sustainability, biotechnology-based innovations are already vital to the competitiveness of major European industries such as pharmaceuticals and chemicals. Biotechnology-based innovations in medicine also have the potential to make a significant contribution to social sustainability by helping to improve the effectiveness of healthcare systems.

Environmental management systems and EMAS

The Environmental Management and Auditing Scheme (EMAS) ⁽²⁾ was created in 1995 to offer companies in the manufacturing sector a voluntary instrument to improve their environmental performance. It demonstrates that a company is committed to continuous environmental improvement, transparency, compliance with environmental legislation and consultation.

Since 2001, the scope of EMAS has been extended to cover organisations from all economic sectors, including public authorities. There are currently 3 930 sites in 3 041 EMAS-registered organisations. The Commission intends to implement EMAS as a first step to improve its own consumption patterns.

Between 2002 and 2004, the Commission and Member States carried out a joint project called 'Best' to identify good practice examples of public policies aimed at

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2002/com2002_0027en01.pdf

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/emas/index_en.htm



promoting environmental management systems (EMAS, EN ISO 14001 and other, less formal systems) in small and medium-sized enterprises. Based on a large number of case studies across Europe, the project's final report makes a series of recommendations on how public authorities at all levels can further encourage the uptake of EMSs in SMEs ⁽¹⁾.

Eco-design requirements for energy-using products

A Directive on establishing a framework for the setting of eco-design requirements for energy-using products (and amending Council Directive 92/94/EEC) was proposed by the Commission in August 2003 (COM(2003) 453 final) ⁽²⁾. The adoption of the framework Directive by the Council and the European Parliament will be a first step which will later enable the Commission, assisted by a regulatory committee, to draw up and adopt binding implementing measures for the different products concerned. Vehicles are excluded from the outset, because they are already subject to specific and very complex regulations.

The framework Directive proposal lays down a comprehensive and coherent legislative framework for addressing eco-design requirements of energy-using products with a view to contributing to sustainable development by ensuring their free movement in the internal market, increasing security of energy supply and promoting a higher level of environmental performance. The framework Directive proposal is in principle applicable to any product using energy to perform the function for which it was designed, manufactured and put on the market. All energy sources are covered, although it is likely that only those using electricity, solid, liquid and gaseous fuels will be the subject of implementing measures.

Although the scope is very broad, in practice the framework Directive proposal defines the criteria for selecting products that can be covered by implementing measures. For example, a product will be selected only if it represents an important volume of sales in the EU market, an important environmental impact at European level and a significant potential for improvement.

Environmental liability

The Directive on Environmental Liability ⁽³⁾ (adopted in April 2004) establishes an environmental liability framework at EU level based on the polluter pays principle. Under the Directive, operators are required to take preventive action where there is an imminent threat of damage and remedial action — at their own expense. The Directive provides for the necessary exemptions and defences to ensure legal certainty and safeguard innovation — for instance, emissions that have been authorised will not give rise to liability.

3.2. Energy

The European Climate Change Programme (ECCP)

The European Climate Change Programme is based on the March 2000 Commission Communication (COM (00) 88) 'EU policies and measures (PAMs) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions: towards a European Climate Change Programme'. In the last three years, the ECCP has undertaken extensive

⁽¹⁾ See for further information: http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/enterprise_policy/best/best_projects_2002/index.htm

⁽²⁾ <http://www.cfsd.org.uk/seeba/EuP.pdf>

⁽³⁾ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/liability/>



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analysis of the most environmentally and cost-effective additional policies and measures enabling the EU to meet its – 8 % target under the Kyoto Protocol, equivalent to 336 Mt CO₂eq.

In total, 11 different working groups were established and have operated under the coordination of an ECCP Steering Committee:

- flexible mechanisms: emissions trading;
- flexible mechanisms: JI/CDM;
- energy supply;
- energy demand;
- energy efficiency in end-use equipment and industrial processes;
- transport;
- industry (subgroups on fluorinated gases, renewable raw materials, voluntary agreements);
- research;
- agriculture;
- sinks in agricultural soils;
- forest-related sinks.

Stakeholder consultation is viewed as essential for the success of the European Climate Change Programme, firstly because it gathers the required expertise and secondly by helping building consensus, which greatly facilitates fast implementation of agreed measures.

The ECCP has promoted the issue of horizontal integration of environmental policy across the directorates-general of the European Commission. In addition, it builds on and strengthens ongoing activities at EU level, thereby contributing to a bi-directional cross-fertilisation. It also dovetails with the Sixth Environmental Action Programme ⁽¹⁾ and the EU Strategy for Sustainable Development ⁽²⁾.

The working group structure reflects to a large extent a cross-sectoral approach, whereby each sector should contribute to the set objective, while the precise intensity of the emission reduction effort for each needs to be re-allocated based on cost-effectiveness. The different working groups therefore used common criteria to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the specific measures. Other common criteria for the cross-sectoral assessment and comparison of measures, were the time frame for implementation and the impact on other policy areas.

The legislative measures currently in force or already proposed by the Commission related to climate change include key measures such as the proposal on an EU emissions trading scheme, a proposal to link the Kyoto project-based mechanisms with the EU emissions trading scheme, the Directive on the promotion of electricity of renewable energy sources, the Directive on the energy performance of buildings, the IPCC Directive, the landfill Directive, the proposal for a regulation on fluorinated gases, proposals for a Directive on bio-fuels and CHP and the EU Strategy to reduce CO₂ emissions of passenger cars. In addition, the 2003 CAP reform includes *inter alia* measures that increase support for the production of energy crops and for the reduction of incentives towards intensive production.

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/2002/l_242/l_24220020910en00010015.pdf

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2001/com2001_0264en01.pdf

Germany: The Renewable Energy Sources Act

The Renewable Energy Sources Act aims at providing at least 12.5 % of total electricity supply from renewable energy sources. The medium-term objective for 2020 is to increase the share to at least 20 %. Thus, the framework for expanding renewable energies has been clearly set for all parties involved. The Renewable Energy Sources Act provides for the connection to the general power grid of plants producing electricity from renewable energies. The Act also provides for the priority purchase, transmission and payment of the electricity by the system operators as well as for a nationwide compensation scheme for the electricity purchased. The fees paid for electricity from renewable sources are ranging from 6.6 cents per kWh for hydropower to 45.7 cents per kWh for solar. (www.bmu.de)

Household energy efficiency, energy performance of buildings

The EU Eco-label ⁽¹⁾ (see under Labelling for general description) has developed ecological criteria for several household appliances and other products (refrigerators, washing machines, dishwashers, light bulbs, TVs and PCs) to give consumers guidance when looking for energy-efficient products.

A Directive on the energy performance of buildings ⁽²⁾ was adopted in December 2002, fixing a legislative framework to reduce growth in energy demand by promoting energy savings in the buildings sector, including heating, cooling, lighting, hot water and installed equipment (ventilation, air conditioning, heating).

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3.3. Agriculture and forestry

Agriculture

The Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) ⁽³⁾ reforms undertaken in 1992 and in 1999 (Agenda 2000) represent significant steps forward in the integration of environmental concerns into the CAP. Measures include the following.

— First pillar of CAP — Market policy and direct payments: shift from price support to direct payments with direct payments partially decoupled from production; obligatory set-aside for arable crops; extensification premia for beef production; obligation to comply with environmental protection requirements in order to benefit from market support (cross-compliance); possibility to shift support from market policies to rural development measures (optional 'modulation').

— Second pillar of CAP — Rural development policy: Definition of codes of good farming practices, with verifiable standards; support for agri-environmental measures; support for less-favoured areas in order to ensure the continuation of farming in the LFAs (Less Favoured Areas) and thus preserving scenic landscapes and conserving environmentally valuable habitats; support for areas with environmental restrictions, support for agri-environmental training in particular when farmers wish to reorient their production practices towards a better protection of the environment,

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/ecolabel/index_en.htm

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/2003/l_001/l_00120030104en00650071.pdf

⁽³⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/capreform/index_en.htm

improvement of processing and marketing of agricultural products. Eligibility for support to some measures (such as investment) is conditional on respect of minimum environmental standards.

The 2003 CAP reform is a further step in this direction. The key elements of the reform are:

First pillar of CAP — Market policy and direct payments

- a single farm payment for EU farmers, decoupled from production; limited coupled elements may be maintained. Some specific payments are kept to avoid abandonment of production,
- all direct payments will be obligatory linked to the respect of statutory requirements in three areas (environment, public, animal and plant health as well as animal welfare standards) and to the requirement to keep all farmland in good agricultural and environmental condition (cross-compliance sanction mechanism),
- a reduction in direct payments ('modulation') to provide additional funds for rural development policy,

Second pillar of CAP — Rural development policy

- a strengthened rural development policy with more EU money, new measures to promote the environment, food quality and animal welfare and to help farmers to meet demanding EU standards in the fields of the environment, public, animal and plant health, animal welfare and occupational safety.

The development of agri-environmental indicators shall provide the means for assessing the integration of environmental concerns into the CAP.

The 2003 CAP reform was complemented in 2004 by a second wave of reform affecting the olive oil, tobacco, cotton and hop sectors. The fundamental principles and benefits of the 'new' CAP introduced in 2003, including decoupling and cross-compliance, have been extended to four sectors.

Greece: Energy investments in agriculture

Energy investments in the agricultural domain have been reinforced (renewable energy sources, co-production and energy conservation measures) through the operational framework programme 'Competitiveness' (EPAN) of the Ministry of Development, the operational framework programme 'Information society' of the Ministry of Agriculture (Action 7.8.3 of the operational framework programme on rural development and countryside regeneration) and the development of a legislative framework (which is under amendment).

However, the reform process is not yet completed. Two proposals for legislation that may affect sustainable consumption and production were adopted by the Commission in July 2004: the future Rural Development Policy and the reform of the EU Sugar Regime. They are currently being discussed in the Council of Ministers.

Quality agricultural products are protected at Community level under the regimes of protected designation of origin, protected geographical indication and certificate of specific character (Council Regulations (EEC) No 2081/92 ⁽¹⁾ and (EEC) No 2082/92 ⁽²⁾). Support is provided to

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.patent.bmwa.gv.at/Texte/GesetzeEngl/ECRegulation2081.pdf>

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/consleg/pdf/1992/en_1992R2082_do_001.pdf

Community quality assurance and certification schemes that impose binding product specifications and specific production requirements, and verification of compliance with those specifications and requirements. Support given to these schemes is expected to contribute to the diffusion of farming practices favourable to the environment.

The 2003 reform of the CAP has introduced under rural development a new measure concerning food quality. Farmers will be encouraged to participate in national and European quality assurance and certification schemes and producers will be supported for the promotion in the context of quality assurance, geographical indication and organic farming.

During the last years, there has been a rapid development of the organic sector and by the end of 2001, 3.3 % of the total area in the Community was cultivated by the organic production method. At Community level, organic farming is officially recognised and regulated by Council Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91 ⁽¹⁾. Farmers wishing to market their produce as organic must be certified by independent bodies.

Czech Republic: Organic farming

By the end of 2002, 717 organic farmers (that is, less than 3 % of farmers) were farming 235 136 ha. of agriculture land (i.e. 5.5 % of total agricultural land). Despite strict criteria, which are used for organic agriculture, the farmer's interest in this way of farming increases year by year — mainly owing to the grants. At the beginning of 2004, there were already 810 organic farmers farming on 255 000 ha of agriculture land (i.e. about 6 % of total agricultural land).

In spite of deficits in the bioproduction itself, and a weak representation of the products on the market, the total turnover on the Czech market with bioproducts was CZK 150 to 200 million (€ 5 to 6 million).

<http://www.pro-bio.cz/english/english.htm>

Organic farming addresses many environmental concerns: soils have a higher organic matter content, hence binding pollutants and providing a higher water retention capacity and a better soil protection; the restricted use of pesticides reduces the risk of residues in the environment and plays an important role in the effort to halt the loss of biodiversity in the environment; organic waste is usually recycled on farm and replaces chemical fertilisers, therefore contributing to reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and leaching of nitrates. Finally, organic produce meet many consumers' demand for extra food quality.

Lithuania: Organic farming

The number of organic farms in Lithuania is constantly on the increase. Since 1993, the Lithuanian government has certified organic farms. The State provides support for those engaged in organic farming. Direct payments are made for a hectare of crops obtained from a certified plot of land. This support has been provided to farmers since 1997 and has encouraged the increase in ecological production. The demand for ecological products in Lithuania is on the increase. In parallel to this, the total use of mineral fertilisers decreased from 56 400 tonnes in 1997 to 39 500 tonnes in 2001.

Organic production can be supported under various measures of rural development, for example, investments in agricultural holdings or in processing and marketing, as well as under agri-environment.

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/consleg/pdf/1991/en_1991R2092_do_001.pdf

In 2004, the Commission adopted a European Action Plan for organic food and farming ⁽¹⁾ that contains proposals for future initiatives aimed to enhance the further development of the organic farming sector.

There is also Community environmental legislation addressing agriculture, for example, a Directive on nitrates, the IPPC Directive, the water framework Directive and a Directive on the use of Sewage Sludge. Thematic strategies on soil protection and the sustainable use of pesticides are also being developed.

Forestry

Sustainable management of forests plays an essential role in the preservation of water, biodiversity and soil, assures substantial production and employment and may contribute to the prevention of climate change.

The European Environment Agency (EEA) ⁽²⁾ reports on general environmental conditions in Europe have indicated a tendency towards more uniform forest structures, reduction of variety in tree species and loss of biodiversity. The UNECE/FAO assessment of the temperate and boreal forests (TBFRA 2000) ⁽³⁾ gathered new data on forest dwelling species showing that the number of threatened *taxa* is alarmingly high. The finalisation of the Natura 2000 ⁽⁴⁾ designation process has revealed that forests are among the most important group of habitats in this network of protected sites.

EU and Member States' contribution to the climate change strategies can be achieved through the protection and enhancement of existing carbon stocks, the establishment of new carbon stocks and encouragement of the use of biomass and wood-based products.

Slovenia: Forestry

Forest covers nearly 56 % of the total area of Slovenia. The country has a long tradition for sustainable forest management dating back to the 18th century. Over 85 % of the afforestation occurs due to natural processes, and clear cutting is strictly forbidden. To further preserve this valuable natural resource Slovenia introduced an additional Programme for Sustainable Forest Management in 1996 – see <http://www.sigov.si/mkpg/>. Furthermore, 35.5 % of the total area of Slovenia is designated as Natura 2000 sites, and nearly 20 % of the total area of Slovenia falls under so-called protected areas for the abstraction of drinking water with a special regime.

Forests have an important role to play in climate change mitigation. The enhancement of carbon sinks by forest management measures and through Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects in developing countries have gained increasing attention and will become operational activities in the future. The EU has set up an array of measures to increase the use of renewable energy sources (RES) in electricity generation, heating and transport for which forest biomass may play an important role. The effects of the interactions between the requirements of the RES policy on wood supply and the needs of the EU wood-processing industries have become the subject of some concern. Given this, the Commission has set up a working group to study and report on these interactions.

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/agriculture/qual/organic/plan/index_en.htm

⁽²⁾ <http://www.eea.eu.int/>

⁽³⁾ <http://www.unece.org/trade/timber/fra/welcome.htm>

⁽⁴⁾ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/nature/natura.htm>

In autumn 2003, a Regulation was adopted on the monitoring of forests and environmental interactions in the Community, called 'Forest Focus' ⁽¹⁾. It builds on the results achieved by two previous schemes related to the monitoring of atmospheric pollution and forest fires and aims to continue and further develop monitoring of forest condition and improving the awareness of the importance of forests for the environment. The programme will initially run for the period 2003–06, with a total budget of € 61 million.

Forestry measures under the second pillar of the CAP (Rural Development) cover three main themes for privately owned and municipal forests, with a total budget of € 4.7 billion (2000–06):

- Afforestation of agricultural land;
- Investments to improve the multifunctional role of forestry;
- Improvement of the ecological and protective forest functions.

The 2003 CAP reform introduced the possibility to support ecological improvements in State-owned forests as well.

The future rural development policy, under discussion at the Council, as mentioned above, will also concern the forestry sector.

Spain: Forestry

The Spanish Association of Wood Importers (AEIM), adopted the 'Code of best environmental practices' in 2002, signed by all member companies.

The Spanish Association of Wood Importers (AEIM) is a private business organisation that is made up of the main Spanish importers supplying raw materials and processed products to the wood industry: carpentry, construction, decoration, etc. www.aeim.org

The forest-based industries (woodworking, pulp and paper, paper and board converting and printing) constitute one of Europe's largest industrial sectors, accounting for about 7 % of European manufacturing industry's total value of production. The Commission keeps in close touch with the industry and regular cooperation with stakeholders takes place under the auspices of the 'Advisory Committee on Community Policy regarding Forestry and the Forestry-based Industries' established by a 1997 Commission Decision. As a result of the Commission Communication on 'The State of the Competitiveness of the EU-Forest-Based and Related Industries' (1999) ⁽²⁾, a Forum of high-level representatives was set up consisting of top management from industry, public authorities and other stakeholders. Several key policy issues have been addressed, such as the competitiveness of the forest-based industries, climate change, the enhanced use of wood and renewable energy sources.

3.4. Fisheries

The Council of Ministers agreed, in December 2002, on the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). According to the new Regulation ((EC) 2371/2002) ⁽³⁾, 'the objective of the CFP should be to provide for sustainable exploitation of living aquatic resources and of aquaculture in the context of sustainable development, taking account of the environmental economic and social aspects in a balanced manner'.

⁽¹⁾ <http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/l28125.htm>

⁽²⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/forest_based/comm_en.pdf

⁽³⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/pri/en/oj/dat/2002/l_358/l_35820021231en00590080.pdf

The main objectives of the new CFP are as follows.

- To conserve fish stocks: Under the new CFP, long-term objectives for attaining and/or maintaining safe levels of adult fish in EU stocks will be set as well as the measures needed to reach these levels.
- To protect the marine environment: The Community Action Plan to integrate environmental protection requirements into the CFP sets out a list of actions and associated timeframes to address the following three priorities:
 - a reduction in fishing pressure to sustainable levels;
 - an improvement of fishing methods to reduce discards, incidental by-catch and impact on habitats;
 - the elimination of public aid for the modernisation or renewal of the fishing fleet.

Under the action plan, the Commission is designing an experimental system based on indicators to monitor the integration process.

- A new policy for the fleets: The reform has responded to the challenge of chronic overcapacity of the EU fleet basically by removing financial aid to building new boats or to increase the fishing capacity of the existing ones.
- Better application of the rules: The diversity of national control systems and sanctions for rule breakers undermines the effectiveness of enforcement. Measures are foreseen to develop cooperation, and to strengthen the uniformity of control and sanctions throughout the EU.
- Stakeholders' involvement: Regional advisory councils (RACs) will be set up to enable fishermen, scientists and other stakeholders to work together and to find ways of achieving sustainable fisheries in the areas of interest to the RAC concerned.

Aquaculture

The Strategy for the sustainable development of European aquaculture ⁽¹⁾ strengthens the role of aquaculture in providing jobs and in supplying quality fisheries products in a way that does not harm the environment.

3.5. Transport

In December 1995, the European Commission launched a Strategy for improving the fuel efficiency of passenger cars through labelling and fiscal measures. The Strategy aimed at reducing CO₂ emissions to 120g/km as an average for newly registered cars in the EU by 2005, and 2010 at the latest. Substantial progress has been made towards achieving this goal by means of voluntary agreements adopted in April 2000 with European, Japanese and Korean car manufacturers, setting a target of 140 g/km by 2008 (European producers) and 2009 (Asian producers), respectively. The impact of the voluntary agreement has been estimated to reduce EU CO₂ emissions by 82 Mt CO₂ eq. annually.

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2002/com2002_0511en01.pdf



In May 2003, two Directives on the Regulatory and Fiscal promotion of Biofuels ⁽¹⁾ were adopted. Fuels derived from agricultural sources (that is, biofuels) are considered to have considerable potential in the short to medium term. The first Directive establishes a minimum level of biofuels as a proportion of fuels sold from 2005, starting with 2 % and reaching 5.75 % of fuels sold in 2010. The second Directive gives Member States the option of applying a reduced rate of excise duty to pure or blended biofuels, when used either as heating or motor fuel.

The CIVITAS initiative ⁽²⁾, adopted in November 2001, aims at the reduction of traffic congestion and pollution in cities through the development of an attractive alternative to the use of private cars. The cities taking part in the pilot projects will combat congestion and pollution through technologies and measures making energy part of urban transport policy, in particular by enhancing energy efficiency and 'clean' fuels.

Italy: The Arese site for sustainable mobility

In order to reduce air pollution and CO₂ emissions, Arese (Milan area) has been nominated as the 'Site for sustainable mobility', which gathers in the same geographical area all elements (actors and activities) needed to develop and place on the market ecological car products and innovative technologies (clean fuels, hydrogen, fuel-cells, LNG, etc.) The site is expected to become a major producer of all components of the 'ecological car'. The activities carried out include research, experimentation, prototypes, and industrial production. The actors involved are: research centres, universities, car manufacturers and other industrial operators/business in the automotive sector, including those in the field of car certification and prototype production. It is based on an agreement between the municipalities involved and the Region Lombardia, which is the major supporter by offering incentives and facilities to all actors interested in joining the project and settling themselves in Arese.

The CUTE and ECTOS programmes ⁽³⁾ support the introduction of hydrogen-powered city buses into urban transport and promotes the development of hydrogen as an alternative transport fuel. Within this framework, the European Commission has awarded more than € 20 million to 10 European cities (Amsterdam, Barcelona, Hamburg, London, Luxembourg, Madrid, Porto, Stockholm, Stuttgart and Reykjavik) to introduce hydrogen and fuel cell buses into their public transport system.

The Commission's White Paper on Transport Policy (COM(2001) 370) ⁽⁴⁾ supports the approach of gradually breaking the link between constant transport growth and economic growth in order to reduce the pressure on the environment and prevent congestion while maintaining the EU's economic competitiveness. Current work, in the framework of the Commission's enterprise policy, on basic orientations for the sustainability of European tourism has identified the above-mentioned issue as crucial for growth and competitiveness in this sector and the related economy (12 % of total EU GDP and employment).

3.6. Tourism

In spring 2003, the Commission launched a stakeholder consultation on sustainable tourism. It was particularly looking for reaction regarding policy options for facing the challenges of sustainable tourism in the European context, the concept of action and the Community contri-

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/pdf/2001/en_501PC0547_01.pdf

⁽²⁾ <http://www.civitas-initiative.org/civitas/home.cfm>

⁽³⁾ http://www.fuel-cell-bus-club.de/html/body_cute_ectos.html

⁽⁴⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/energy_transport/en/lb_en.html

bution, the measures that the Commission should envisage, and the role of other stakeholders. Based on the conclusions of this broad consultation, the Commission adopted in November 2003 a Communication 'Basic orientations for the sustainability of European tourism' (COM (2003) 716) ⁽¹⁾. The Communication emphasises the need to ensure the consistency of various Community policies and measures affecting the sustainability of tourism and the competitiveness of the industry.

In autumn 2003, the Commission also set up a feasibility and preparatory study on a Multi-stakeholder European Targeted Action for Sustainable Tourism and Transport. The study was undertaken within the context of the Council decision on a multiannual programme for enterprise and entrepreneurship, and in particular for small and medium-sized enterprises (2001–05).

France: Management of tourist activities and *terroirs*

The term *terroir* is widely used in French referring to a territorial entity whose heritage value is the result of complex, long-term relationships between cultural, social, ecological and economic characteristics. In France, natural regional parks which combine economic activity and protection of the natural and cultural heritage are a good illustration of this concept. A number of appellations of protected origin are, in Europe, promoting this type of production and consumption, in the food sector primarily.

Such a labelling can also be applied to arts and crafts and cultural goods. This strong identity is an asset for the development of tourism activities.

For instance, the Regional Natural Park of Brière is promoting quality services in the tourism sector through the attribution of the 'Reception of the Brière Regional Natural Reserve' label, the criteria of which are: the origin, authenticity, the human dimension and the taking into account of the environment. http://www.espaces-naturels.fr/site/nouveautes/devdurable/pages/fiches.asp?dossier=pages&arbo=1.3&fichier=fiches&id=174&num_model=95

The broad aim of this action is to improve the competitiveness of businesses and promote sustainable development. More specifically, the purpose is to define the approach for a healthy ratio between the tourism volume and the input needed for transport tourists, so that environmental degradation and the growth of European tourism can be uncoupled, and encourage innovative practices to this end, and in general, those regarding sustainable consumption and production patterns in European tourism.

As regards consumer information, the Commission has developed the EU eco-label for tourist accommodation services ⁽²⁾ which provides them with easy and accurate information on those accommodations which use fewer resources such as water and energy and have implemented an environmental management system. An EU eco-label for camp sites is under development.

A few European research projects, supported by the Community framework programme, investigate new ways to promote sustainable tourism, for example by developing tools enabling cultural heritage owners to better manage access to their sites.

⁽¹⁾ <http://destinet.ewindows.eu.org/aEU%20Tourism/sustainability.pdf>

⁽²⁾ <http://www.eco-label-tourism.com/frameset/frameset.html>



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3.7. Waste

Waste reduction, reuse and recycling

Waste prevention is the first priority of the waste hierarchy. This includes both quantitative prevention (producing less waste) and qualitative prevention (reducing the hazardous character of waste).

The EU mainly takes action on waste prevention through integrated and life-cycle approaches. For example, waste prevention is an integral part of BAT and the BREFs that have been developed in the framework of the IPPC Directive (see the section on IPPC).

Slovakia: Waste management plan

The waste management plan 2005 was developed at the regional and national levels to deal with minimisation of waste generation, recovery and recycling. It is based on the adopted environmental *acquis* which secures transposition of EU law; all stakeholders in society, that is, partnerships between the State and local governments, business entities and their unions and associations, NGOs and public institutions participate in its implementation. The Waste Act established a so-called Recycling Fund, a non-State special-purpose fund to concentrate funds to support collection, recovery, and processing of used batteries and accumulators, used oils and tyres, multi-layer combined materials, electronic scrap, plastic materials, fluorescent tubes containing mercury, paper, glass and wastes from metallic packaging materials.

Qualitative prevention is also promoted through regulatory measures limiting the use of hazardous substances. This is mainly achieved through the chemicals policy, and complemented by waste legislation. The latter contains bans on certain hazardous substances, mainly heavy metals, to avoid the arising of wastes contaminated by these substances. This concerns batteries, packaging, end-of-life vehicles and electrical and electronic equipment.

A fundamental element of EU legislation on waste is that Member States must promote the recovery of waste (meaning reuse, recycling and other forms of recovery such as use as a fuel) over waste disposal.

Poland: Packaging waste

In 1998, a packaging return system for specified hazardous substances was introduced in Poland. It aims at collecting scattered used packaging, which is polluted with hazardous substances. The system is regulated by the Act of 11 May 2001 on packaging and packaging waste, which defines the mechanisms for establishing, bonding and return of a deposit for the abovementioned packaging. Producers and importers of hazardous substances are obliged to establish a deposit for separate packaging at 10 to 30 % of the included substance price. Only packaging introduced on the market in order to be used in scientific research or for instructive purposes is not subject to this obligation.

Recycling of particular types of waste is also directly promoted. In particular, recycling of large quantities of packaging has been mandatory since 2001. Recycling targets have also been fixed for electric and electronic waste in the WEEE Directive and must be reached by Member States by 2006. The Restriction of the Use of Certain Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment (RoHS) Directive, which requires the substitution of various heavy metals and brominated flame retardants in new electrical and electronic equipment put on the market from 1 July 2006 further targets this particular type of waste.

Recycling targets have also been set for end-of-life vehicles in the ELV Directive with ambitious targets to be reached by 2015. The WEEE and ELV Directives also encourage design for recycling by making producers responsible for achieving these targets and through provisions concerning better design.

Belgium: Actions developed by the regional authorities

- The Brussels Region organised a double exhibition, called 'Planet to live in or throw away'. The first part attempts to highlight the problem of the hidden side of waste and explains the concept of ecological footprint (www.acrr.org). The second part focus on supermarket shelves, showing useless and wastefulness products and suggesting alternatives (www.ibgebim.be)
- The Walloon Region has created for the industries concerned an integrated questionnaire, which includes all requests and declarations concerning environmental issues (energy, air, water, industrial wastes and expenses (www.wallonie.be from January 2005).
- In Flanders, the Prevention Stimulating Programme (PRESTI) stimulates SMEs to integrate environmental management and prevention into their policy (www.presti.be). Furthermore, an information point for eco-design 'Factor 10', provides information

through a website, a helpdesk and a digital newsletter, workshops and seminars (www.factor10.be)

Both prevention and recycling will be reviewed and promoted in the 'Thematic Strategy on the prevention and recycling of waste' which is planned for spring 2005. This will build on the ideas put forward in the Communication towards the Thematic Strategy on the prevention and recycling of waste ⁽¹⁾, on how to get the most out of existing waste legislation, move towards common standards for recycling facilities and develop waste prevention and recycling in the future.

Waste disposal

Where possible, waste that cannot be recycled or reused should be safely incinerated, with landfill only used as a last resort. Both these methods need close monitoring because of their potential for causing severe environmental damage. The EU has approved a Directive setting strict guidelines for landfill management. It bans certain types of waste, such as used tyres from going to landfill, and sets targets for reducing quantities of biodegradable rubbish. Another Directive lays down tough limits on emission levels from incinerators.

Waste shipment

The Waste Shipment Regulation (EEC) No 259/93 ⁽²⁾ establishes provisions regarding procedures, control and supervisions of shipments of all waste within, into and out of the Community. It implements *inter alia* the Basel Convention on transboundary hazardous waste.

Different control procedures are applied depending on the type of waste shipped (hazardous or non-hazardous), its destination and treatment (recovery or disposal). In relation to shipments of waste for disposal and to shipments of hazardous and semi-hazardous waste for recovery, a system of prior written notification and consent is established. This system allows the competent authorities to take all necessary measures to ensure the protection of human health and the environment. It includes the possibility of objecting to a shipment for environmental reasons/concerns.

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/cnc/2003/com2003_0301en01.pdf

⁽²⁾ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/waste/shipments/>

To protect the environment in third countries from impacts of hazardous waste originating from EU Member States, the Regulation also bans export of hazardous waste from EU Member States to non-OECD countries.

3.8. Chemicals

Chemicals legislation — REACH

In May 2003, the European Commission published a draft text of a new chemicals regulation. It will replace over 40 existing Directives and regulations. After an extensive Internet consultation (over 6 000 comments were received) and subsequent modification of the text, a proposal was adopted by the Commission in October 2003 ⁽¹⁾.

The aims of the new Regulation are to increase the protection of human health and the environment from exposure to chemicals, while at the same time to maintain and enhance the competitiveness and innovative capability of the EU chemicals industry. The proposal requires industry (producers, importers and users of chemicals) to provide information on the chemicals they produce or import and the risks associated with their use.

The regulation is known as REACH — a single, integrated system for the Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals ⁽²⁾. It will place duties on companies which produce, import and use chemicals to assess the risks arising from their use requiring information to be generated where it is not already available — and to identify the necessary measures to manage the risks. The precautionary principle will continue to guide the approach in the implementation of necessary measures.

Denmark: Information Centre for Environment and Health

The Information Centre for Environment and Health is an independent information centre on environment, health and consumption issues. The purpose of the centre is to provide consumers with tools to make their everyday life more environmentally friendly and healthy. The services of the centre have a national scope. It is open for private persons, associations, environmental and consumer organisations as well as enterprises. The services of the centre are free. The Information Centre for Environment and Health offers:

- advice on the environment and consumption about food, children, personal care, the home, the garden and electronics;
- environmental news on the Web;
- a chemical database, which contains environmental information on more than 500 chemicals used in cosmetics, toys, clothes, etc.

<http://www.miljoeogsundhed.dk>

Placing on the market and use of pesticides and biocides

Pesticides are a specific group of chemicals that merit special attention because, on the one hand, they have beneficial effects by combating organisms harmful to agricultural production, materials, and human health, but on the other hand they can have unwanted adverse effects on non-target organisms and humans.

⁽¹⁾ <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/pdf/2003/act0644en03/1.pdf>

⁽²⁾ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/chemicals/chempol/index.htm>

Directive 91/414/EEC ⁽¹⁾ concerning the placing on the market of plant protection products and Directive 98/8/EC ⁽²⁾ concerning the placing on the market of biocides have therefore established that such substances can only be marketed and used after authorisation. During the authorisation process, a rigorous assessment of all risks to human health and the environment will be carried out, and only substances with acceptable risks and proven efficiency can be authorised. This will make production and consumption of such products more sustainable.

In addition, as it was observed that the impacts of plant protection products on health and environment still give rise for concern, the Sixth Community Environment Action Programme calls for the development of a Thematic Strategy on the sustainable use of pesticides ⁽³⁾. The Strategy will focus on the use-phase of pesticides (post-authorisation) and will contain a number of measures and initiatives with the objective of a reduction of the impacts of pesticides on human health and the environment in order to achieve a more sustainable use of pesticides as well as a significant overall reduction in risks and of the use of pesticides consistent with the necessary crop protection. This will further contribute to a more sustainable consumption of these products.

3.9. Housing and construction

Sustainable construction is currently an important main theme in the construction field (construction industry, building industry and also architects and civil engineers). There are initiatives at both European level (for example, various working groups elaborating sustainable construction) and at the national level in Member States.

The manufacturers of construction products are increasingly using 'Environmental Product Declarations' (EPD) ⁽⁴⁾ to describe the environmental impact and the environmental advantages of their products. Following the concept of the 'new approach' a new initiative (chaired by the Commission) is trying to harmonise the different LCA/EPD schemes (via European standards as supplements to the ISO 14000 family) to avoid unnecessary barriers to trade and to improve the data quality along a production chain for industry and the final users.

The Construction Product Directive (CPD) (89/106/CE) ⁽⁵⁾ adopted in 1988 aims at completing the internal market for construction products through the removal of non-tariff barriers to trade by means of technical harmonisation. Essential requirement number three of the CPD concerns hygiene, health and the environment.

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/consleg/pdf/1991/en_1991L0414_do_001.pdf

⁽²⁾ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/biocides/index.htm>

⁽³⁾ http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/com/pdf/2002/com2002_0349en01.pdf

⁽⁴⁾ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/ipp/epds.htm>

⁽⁵⁾ <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/construction/internal/cpd/cpd.htm>

Slovenia: Subsidy schemes for renovation and renewable energy use

The subsidy schemes for households, and the public and commercial sectors are run by the Slovenian AEERE. The schemes are focused on renovation of buildings built before 1980, and promotion of use of different types of renewable energy sources. In 2003, renovation of 222 individual houses and multi-apartment blocks, and installation of 113 solar collectors, 408 heat pumps and 104 biomass-fired boilers were supported in households. In total, some € 2.1 million was spent on subsidies and the estimated volume of investments amounted to € 11.9 million. The fossil fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions is estimated to have decreased by 77 590 MWh and 25 750 tonnes per year respectively. (www.aure.si)

Furthermore, the Thematic Strategy on the urban environment ⁽¹⁾ (as mentioned above) currently underway will develop an integrated approach, focusing on management, transport, design and construction as priority issues.

⁽¹⁾ http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/urban/thematic_strategy.htm

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