

Behaviour Change: A Series of Practical Guides
for Policy-Makers and Practitioners

Number 10

Sustainable Resource Use in Business and Organisations

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Defra has commissioned and funded this study, but the views expressed in this guide do not necessarily reflect Defra policy.

1. Introduction to the series

Defra's 5 year strategy (*Delivering the Essentials of Life*¹) coupled with the UK Government sustainable development strategy (*Securing the Future*²) set out an ambitious agenda for environmental leadership and sustainable development. Embedding these core principles relies on influencing change and making it easier for producers and consumers to behave more sustainably. This is a sizeable task, since changing behaviours is a complex matter and innovative solutions are required.

In July 2005, Defra initiated a programme of research that aimed to broaden understanding of how Government (and others) can most effectively promote pro-environmental behaviour amongst producers and consumers. Several studies were commissioned as part of this research programme, each with a remit to explore a unique aspect of pro-environmental behaviour change.

This practical guide forms part of a series of papers that aims to summarise the key findings and policy implications from these studies.

A full list of titles in this series is provided below:

- Number 1: Sustainable Resource Use in the Home
- Number 2: Targeting Specific Lifestyle Groups
- Number 3: Sustainable Development as a "Collective Choice" Problem
- Number 4: Triggering Widespread Adoption of Sustainable Practices
- Number 5: Understanding Choice
- Number 6: Sustainable Shopping and Sustainable Production
- Number 7: Enhancing Sustainability at Farm Level
- Number 8: Tackling the Waste Challenge
- Number 9: Encouraging Sustainability Amongst Small Businesses
- Number 10: Sustainable Resource Use in Business and Organisations

¹ Defra (2004) *Delivering the essentials of life: Defra's five year strategy*, London: HMSO.
See <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/5year-strategy/index.htm>.

² Defra (2005) *Securing the Future: UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy*, London: HMSO.
See <http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/publications/uk-strategy/index.htm>.

2. Project summary

This guide is informed by the findings of a recent study, entitled 'Promoting pro-environmental behaviour: existing evidence to inform better policy-making'. The project, undertaken by a consortium led by the Centre for Sustainable Development at the University of Westminster, brought together evidence from theory, policy and practice to identify lessons for how policy-makers can influence pro-environmental behaviour change among different target audiences.

The study involved:

- a review of theory relating to pro-environmental behaviour change at the level of individuals, organisations and whole systems;
- an investigation of practical interventions used to influence pro-environmental behaviour, specifically:
 - a review of the different types of policy interventions available for influencing pro-environmental behaviour, with a detailed analysis of 14 examples of specific policy instruments that have influenced pro-environmental behaviour;
 - detailed analysis and comparison of 14 practical initiatives that have achieved changes in pro-environmental behaviour;
- a synthesis of the theoretical, policy and practical approaches to changing pro-environmental behaviour that aimed to identify any general lessons, lessons about how the three approaches interact and influence each other, and recommendations for future work.

Throughout the study individual behaviour change, organisational change within businesses and other institutions, and change across whole systems of delivery were considered under the seven key areas of activity, namely:

1. Helping businesses produce more sustainably (farmers, food industry and wider industry)
2. Encouraging sustainable consumer behaviour (purchasing)
3. Encouraging sustainable resource use within the home and by businesses (design, energy, water etc.)
4. Tackling the waste challenge (reduce, reuse, recycle by households and businesses)
5. Encouraging sustainable behaviour for different sections of society (e.g. the young)
6. Helping farmers (and fishers) become more sustainable land (marine) managers
7. Sustainable procurement – using Government purchasing to influence markets

The study principally used existing data sources, including reports, theoretical papers, and information available on the Internet. This was supplemented where necessary with primary data collected through telephone interviews and email correspondence (for example, interviews with people involved in the practical case study examples and with policy-makers involved in designing specific policy instruments). The theory review was then sent out to peers to identify any inaccuracies or important omissions.

3. Key findings

The main report from the study is available on the Defra website³ and presents detailed results from the study. Some of the overarching lessons about good practice in designing policies and supporting practical initiatives for influencing environmental behaviour are summarised below. This is followed by a summary of evidence from our study that is specifically relevant to sustainable resource use in business and organisations.

General lessons from the study

- **Behaviours are complex and non-linear.** Each behaviour is determined by various (often inter-related) factors, many of which need addressing simultaneously to facilitate change. Thus interventions should combine multiple types of instrument in a 'package' of measures (e.g. infrastructure, fiscal measures, and information). It is suggested that interventions first address external factors (most notably infrastructure and pricing) and then internal factors (e.g. psychological or attitudinal). As well as working on multiple factors, interventions need to work on multiple levels – ultimately addressing society as a whole in order to achieve sustained change.
- **Different audiences behave differently, and require targeted and/or tailored interventions.** To be effective, policy measures usually need to be highly context specific. Devolving responsibility for policy development and delivery to local bodies (Local Authorities, business and industry groups, the voluntary sector and community groups) can help to ensure their suitability and can also help to build their legitimacy. Care should be taken to ensure that the relevant skills and resources are available within these organisations to take on these additional duties.
- **The audience for a change intervention should not be regarded as a passive target.** Policy-makers need to view target audiences and other key stakeholders as 'actors' at the heart of the change process. They should be involved at the earliest opportunity in the change process. Ideally, a total partnership working approach should be adopted in which change partners (including members of the public) are involved from the start in defining and redefining the problem through a continuous cycle of action and reflection, from which learning and innovation will result.
- **Feedback is vital to driving and sustaining change.** Instead of understanding changing behaviour as a single event, it should be viewed as an ongoing process. Policy-makers should ensure that interventions incorporate opportunities to learn from policy audiences – learning captured and fed back from the change process should influence subsequent policy. In order to facilitate this important reflective process, more effective and consistent data collection and collation is required. In future, the appropriate formal evaluation structures should be put in place at the stage of policy development.
- **Government policy needs to convey a consistent message and visibly pull in one direction.** The suite of policies emerging from government needs to avoid contradictions and inconsistencies in order to convey clear messages to target audiences and the public in general. This requirement for harmony needs to apply to all Defra policies and to those coming from the EU, and (possibly more importantly) to those being developed by other government departments. There needs to be greater collaboration and interdepartmental working to achieve this.

³ Visit http://www2.defra.gov.uk/research/project_data/More.asp?l=SD14002&M=KWS&V=behaviour+change&SCOPE=0

- **Individuals have the potential to act as 'change champions'.** Individuals are vital to delivering pro-environmental change, not just for themselves (on the level of individuals) but also within organisations and networks as 'agents for change' (both as managers and 'change champions'). Engaging and nurturing key individuals may be more effective in bringing about system-wide change than targeting the behaviour of all individuals.
- **Policy design should incorporate considerations of equity and fairness.** It is clearly important that policy-makers ensure that policies at least avoid disproportionate negative financial and environmental impacts for the most vulnerable in society and at best reduce inequalities of outcome. Equity concerns are particularly associated with environmental taxes and charges, which can negatively impact on the competitiveness of small businesses, as well as on disadvantaged individuals. Compliance is likely to prove most problematic where policies are perceived as unfair, or poorly targeted, and where alternative options do not appear to be available.
- **Action needs to be taken now to address the pressing environmental problems we face today and in the future.** The appropriateness and relevance of policies to encourage pro-environmental behaviour should be viewed in light of these massive and important global challenges. More far-reaching, targeted and effective policy action is needed than is currently evident. Change takes time, and measures need to be put into place now to influence societal change and respond to environmental pressures.

Specific findings from the study relating to sustainable resource use in business and organisations

There is an extensive literature dealing with the subject of change in organisations. However, most of this literature does not deal with pro-environmental change or sustainable development. We present some useful generic lessons. The strand of literature that does address pro-environmental behaviour change in organisations is principally focused on describing such change in specific types of organisation (for example specific business sectors, or public sector bodies).

a) Types of organisational change

Change in organisations falls under two main types.

- Incremental change involves step by step improvements to existing systems (Dunphy, 2003). **Incremental change only works when a problem can be clearly defined and fixed, and is effective when an organisation is performing tolerably well in the first place.** Criticisms of incremental change point out that it produces only piecemeal solutions, and that these can weaken the organisation as a whole because they change elements of a system with unknown consequences for the system as a whole (for example: Chapman, 2004);
- Transformational change involves a process of deep, or fundamental change (for example, completely redesigning a system from scratch rather than fixing problems in a piecemeal way). **Transformational change is suited to addressing crises in systems where problems and solutions are not clearly understood** (Chapman, 2004). Transformational change is not controlled from the start, but is a dynamic process that will lead to change through cycles of action and reflection.

3. Key findings

Both types are likely to be relevant to achieving pro-environmental change in organisations. Transformational change may often be most appropriate due to the fundamental and pressing nature of the environmental problems being addressed. For example, a study of local government offices in Australia found that a third were at very early stages of developing integrated water management practices and that transformational change was likely to be needed if they were to implement these within the necessary time frame.

In practice pro-environmental behaviour change in organisations is often incremental and this type of change may be easier for organisations to embrace; for example, energy efficiency improvements to manufacturing processes, or integrating increased recycling into local authority waste collection and processing.

b) What drives change in organisations?

Change in organisations can be driven from within, or from outside. The literature identifies three main drivers, or forces, for change in organisations, namely: learning, leadership and adaptation.

- **Action learning** is often considered synonymous with organisational change. Some theories propose that organisations should aim to be continually learning and changing, and constant change and adaptation is considered an inherent part of modern business. Tools and approaches to help develop learning organisations include using ‘action networks’ – facilitated inter-disciplinary groups of stakeholders working on a common problem, using cycles of action and reflection (see our full report for more information) (Chapman, 2004). Learning can take place at different levels – for example, first order learning involves straight forward learning from action (‘instrumental learning’); while second order learning involves questioning underlying assumptions (‘process learning’) (Argyris and Schon, 1996).
- **Change champions – leaders** are seen as essential to driving change. The literature identifies two main (but overlapping) ‘types’ of leader.
 - **managers** tend to take a traditional role in managing incremental change. They drive change from the centre by gathering learning from practitioners and then implementing this across the organisation; and
 - **champions** catalyse the process of change, often acting as facilitators in action networks, and importantly sharing in the process of learning themselves.

Given their key role, supporting and developing leaders can be a productive way of supporting change in organisations. **Involvement in action learning networks is suggested as important to developing both change managers and champions.** Encouraging experience and involvement outside the organisation is another technique suggested, for example by building networks of leaders or champions between organisations (for example: Ballard & Ballard, 2005a).

- **Organisational adaptation** to a range of external events, is often observed to drive pro-environmental change. Key pressures for adaptation include.
 - *changes in markets* can drive change by offering new opportunities or by creating consumer demand for change. There is debate about the extent to which consumer demand is driving environmental improvements by producers. Ecological modernisation theory suggests that consumer demand does already drive producers to minimise negative environmental impacts. However, research into the reality of the situation has suggested

that, at least in the case of small and medium sized enterprises, consumer demand does not yet require pro-environmental behaviour from businesses (Revell & Blackburn 2004). A survey of a range of small and medium sized businesses, including builders, architects, restaurants and farmers found that demand for pro-environmental behaviour by these businesses was not being expressed by consumers. This led to the conclusion that the most effective intervention to achieve pro-environmental behaviour change in these businesses would be “*legislative compulsion*”. Even financial incentives and charges were deemed inadequate, as the survey indicated that they would either be worked around, or passed directly onto consumers in price rises (Revell & Blackburn 2004).

- *Regulation* can require change in organisations. An important point to remember is that systems often respond in unexpected ways. Regulation usually targets a specific behaviour, such as pollution from a specific process. However, these behaviours are part of a larger organisation or system, often leading to unintended consequences and making the outcome of policy interventions hard to predict (Chapman, 2004).
- Morton, chair of the Sustainable Procurement Task Force, has identified a range of potential trigger factors that could lead to more environmental purchasing by businesses (Morton et al., 2002).
 - External pressures included fiscal measures; regulation and legislation; market pressures (both of supply and demand); indicators and benchmarks; and stakeholder pressure (including from investors).
 - Internally, environmental purchasing needs to be justified with a business case. Some key potential benefits for a business that could support such a case include: minimising waste and improving resource efficiency; securing the supply of goods and services; providing cost savings; and enhancing corporate image.

c) Mechanisms for change

Research into the process of pro-environmental change in organisations (specifically the development of integrated water management practices by Australian local government offices) found that action learning, change champions, and inter-organisational working were fundamental (Brown, 2004).

d) Evidence on pro-environmental change by organisation type.

Our study includes the following findings about pro-environmental change in specific types of organisation.

- **Local authorities are promoters of pro-environmental change as well as targets for pro-environmental policy interventions.** They can often act as ‘linking pins’ bringing together different stakeholders and organisations and catalysing change (large NGOs can also play a linking pin role as they often bring organisations from different sectors together) (Ballard & Ballard 2005b).
- **Voluntary and community sector groups are usually set up to take action and their fundamental purpose is often to drive change.** They can also help individuals to undertake pro-environmental behaviour through campaigning, and by offering opportunities to take action.

3. Key findings

- Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). As discussed above, there is debate about the extent to which consumer demand is driving environmental improvements by businesses. One piece of research found that **consumers are not yet demanding environmental behaviour by small businesses including builders, architects, restaurateurs and farmers**. The study concluded that the most effective intervention to achieve pro-environmental behaviour change in these businesses would be “*legislative compulsion*” ((Revell & Blackburn 2004)).
- There are many case studies of pro-environmental change in larger organisations. One example was a study into the NHS in Cornwall that identified a range of barriers to pro-environmental change, including: inherent resistance to change; a focus on delivering against Government targets and programmes, with environmental concerns secondary to reducing cost inefficiencies; sustainability principles not written into many of the trusts’ policies; insufficient co-operation between sites at management level; no environmental leadership or awareness training for front line staff, with many staff reporting that environmental issues were someone else’s problem (Tudor et. al., 2004, 2005).

A note on using behaviour change theories and models

There are many models and theories that attempt to describe environmental behaviour. Most relate to generic behaviours – for example, all pro-environmental behaviours rather than just, say, recycling glass. They also tend to average out the behaviour of many individuals to describe an average person’s behaviour. Theory and practical experience show that policy changes will not affect all individuals equally and so policy-makers using these models will need to refine them in the relevant context prior to implementation.

A note on using policy tools

Policy tools can provide a powerful and effective way of influencing pro-environmental behaviour (such as, economic incentives, pricing of resources, and regulation). However, they need to be used with caution and care.

- **Complexity.** The impact of policy tools can often be complex and unpredictable, and may not have the intended effect. For example: businesses may choose to absorb the cost of environmental taxes and charges, reducing their impact on consumer behaviour (e.g. airlines could compensate for carbon tax on aviation fuel through price reductions in tourist packages); species-based quotas on fishing fleets have led to the discarding of catches, contributing to an increase in the proportion of ‘at risk’ species.
- **Distribution and equality of outcomes.** Policy interventions can have negative impacts on equity, for example increasing the price of a resource can impact disproportionately on people living on a low income. Interventions can also impact negatively on business competitiveness, which can impact particularly on Small and Medium Sized Enterprises.
- **Value for money.** Recognise the full administrative cost of policies, both to the Government and/or third parties when enforcing compliance.
- **Additionality.** For example, would beneficiaries of subsidies and/or grants have behaved in a similar way over time without the intervention?.

- **Public response.** Be aware that lack of public acceptance of an intervention may serve to undermine the intervention (e.g. the Fuel Tax Escalator).
- **Scope.** Single interventions are likely to have limited impact. For example, regulation alone is unlikely to encourage longer-term change or establish new social norms. Multiple interventions are needed with, for example, regulation supported by information, fiscal and other incentives, supporting infrastructure and incentives for technical innovation.

4. Policy implications

It is widely recognised that influencing human and organisational behaviour is difficult whatever the policy arena. Our study has identified some basic principles that appear to underlie much behaviour change theory and practice, and some practical lessons that could help policy-makers wishing to encourage pro-environmental behaviours. This section presents a set of practical 'steps' that show how policy-makers and practitioners can apply these principles and lessons when trying to influence pro-environmental behaviours.

The 'steps' overlap to some extent and do not follow in strict chronological order, often needing to be applied in parallel. They do not represent a simple 'how to' or 'step by step' guide. The 'steps' are generic, being applicable regardless of the behaviour in question. In this guide we illustrate them in relation to sustainable resource use in business and other organisations.

Step 1: Scoping the task

Pro-environmental behaviours are **complex, influenced by multiple factors acting on multiple levels within the context of wider systems**. An early important step is to 'unpick' the specific behaviour you want to change and identify the scope of the task. What different elements make up the behaviour you are interested in? What factors could be involved in influencing it? How does the behaviour relate to its wider context?

Policy example: sustainable resource use in business and organisations

For the challenge of trying to influence sustainable resource use in business and other organisations the following interlinked factors will be important:

- the attitudes and behaviour of people who lead and work in the organisations;
- the type of organisation, what purpose it has, what pressures it responds to and how it operates internally;
- external factors such as legislation, consumer pressure and links between the organisation in question and other organisations and institutions;
- organisations are always part of bigger systems – for example production and consumption systems – and these bigger systems will obviously also be important in determining an organisation's behaviour.

Each of these elements will be influenced by a range of factors such as: organisational 'culture' and history; social pressures and political systems; the type of customer or user of the business / organisation; the business or organisation's official aims, strategy and principles; the markets within which businesses operate; mandates from outside an organisation; prices and availability of resources.

Step 2: Developing a more detailed understanding of the behaviours in question

Once you have identified the different factors involved in a behaviour and its wider context, you can turn to theory and lessons from practice to better understand the behaviour and how to influence it, including:

- models that have been developed or applied specifically for the behaviour in question, and any generic models that can help;
- research findings may help identify what factors are seen as significant, and at what levels, for different audience groups; and
- relevant practical case studies may help build up a more detailed understanding of the behaviours and what is likely to influence them.

Policy example: sustainable resource use in business and other organisations

Our study does not include any theories or models specific to the challenge of influencing resource use behaviours within organisations. However, the extensive general literature on change in organisations contains some generic theories that could help in designing relevant interventions. These relevant general theories are presented in Section 3 above.

Step 3: developing a package of interventions to achieve change

It is important to **take a whole system, outward-looking, approach to influencing an environmental behaviour. 'Single sphere' interventions are unlikely to be effective**, especially in achieving significant lasting change. However, you will be unable to undertake all possible measures, and any policy intervention will be practically limited.

The most effective approach is to **develop a package of focused interventions that influence enough key factors for a behaviour to achieve change**. Fundamental to this is a good understanding of the behaviour, its wider context and the factors that influence it. The other 'steps' discussed below will also be important.

Policy example: sustainable resource use in business and other organisations

We have established that we need to look at influencing:

- the people who lead and work in the organisations in question;
- external pressures on the organisation, including from customers, other stakeholders, other linked organisations and mandates such as legislation; and
- the bigger systems within which the organisations in question are operating.

In order to achieve significant change you will therefore need to try to influence all of these different elements of the system together using a package of interventions (see Box 1). For example, you may want to stimulate consumer demand for more energy efficient products,

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support changes to the resource efficiency of manufacturing processes within a business, support the development of new technology that can help businesses be more resource efficient, and influence the price and sustainability of resources that businesses are using. Each one of these interventions is likely to need a package of measures. For example, changing the resource efficiency of manufacturing processes may involve winning over and supporting key leaders within organisations; providing information on alternative technologies or processes; and supporting an intermediate organisation to provide hands-on support and grants to help businesses transform their processes.

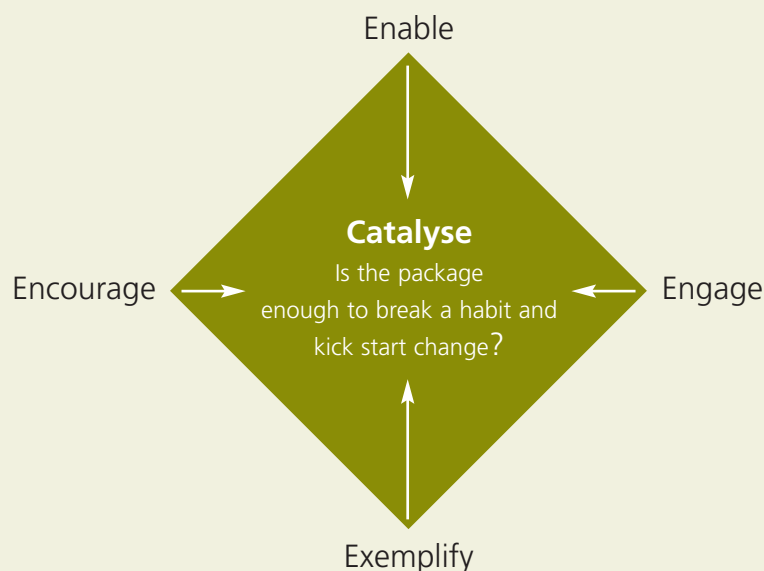
Box 1 – The UK Government Sustainable Development ‘Diamond Model’: helping you develop a package of measures

The ‘Diamond Model’ (also known as the ‘4 E’s’ model) is a model that provides a framework for thinking about the different approaches policy-makers can take to influence a behaviour, and how to balance these to produce an effective package of interventions which “catalyse” change. The model suggests using a mix of interventions to Enable, Engage, Exemplify and Encourage (HM Government, 2005).

Approach evolves as attitudes and behaviours change over time

- Remove barriers
- Give information
- Provide facilities
- Provide variable alternatives
- Educate/train/provide/skills
- Provide capacity

- Tax system
- Expenditure – grants
- Reward scheme
- Recognition/social pressure – league tables
- Penalties, fines & enforcement action



- Community action
- Co-production
- Deliberative fora
- Personal contacts /enthusiasts
- Media campaigns /opinion formers
- Use networks

- Leading by example
- Achieving consistency in policies

Step 4: Engaging the target audience

A key early stage in any attempt to influence environmental behaviour is to **engage the audience that you are trying to influence**. Working with actors and stakeholders in a particular area of change is seen as essential in theory at all levels, and emerged as a strong theme in our review of policy tools and practice case studies. In short, your target audience understands the factors that influence their own behaviour, the constraints they face and the practical context within which they are acting better than anyone. Engaging people or organisations early in the policy development process also helps give them ownership of the challenge and means they are less likely to feel threatened by, or hostile to, change.

Policy example: sustainable resource use in business and other organisations

If you want to, for example, improve energy efficiency within local authorities, you first need to find out what opportunities and barriers they face to change. Engaging key people within local authorities will be essential if you are to understand properly what changes or support could help improve energy efficiency practices within councils. It will also be important to engage a good range of stakeholders including, for example, politicians (who may be necessary to drive change), officers (who may need to design changes), and technicians or administrators (who may be involved in implementing changes).

Step 5: Identifying the tools and approaches available to influence change

Consideration should be given to the tools and approaches that could be effective for the behaviour(s) and audience you are targeting. You should consider:

- the range of policy tools available and whether any have been applied in similar circumstances. The UK Government Sustainable Development 'Diamond Model' may also help here (see Box 1 above);
- the strengths, weaknesses and pitfalls of policy interventions, as discussed in section 3 above;
- what has worked in similar situations – practical case studies may prove helpful; and
- whether relevant theories can be applied.

Policy example: sustainable resource use in business and other organisations

Our study includes the following examples relevant to influencing the key factors we identified above (see Boxes 2, 3 and 4).

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Box 2: Interface Ltd. - leading radical, transformational, change from within an organisation

Interface Incorporated is a multinational carpet tile manufacturing company with radical environmental goals. It is working to improve the sustainability of every aspect of its operation, with the ultimate aim of eliminating all negative environmental impacts. The impetus for pro-environmental change began outside the organisation with customers asking questions about environmental performance, and a changing context where sustainable development was gaining more importance and recognition. However, the radical nature of Interface's engagement with environmental change resulted from a champion within the business - the company's chairman became convinced of the importance of sustainable development and convinced the company's senior management to commit to these radical goals. Implementing change involved: ongoing drive from the management and champions within the organisation; an action learning approach where a task force of external experts was brought together to innovate and advise on change; a fundamental review of all aspects of the business and outside connections, followed by the development of goals for improvement and monitoring systems with feedback to help drive change; a range of specific innovations and projects to change all aspects of the business' operations, including radical re-thinks of processes and approaches.

Box 3: WWF ranking of power companies – pressure for change from outside an organisation

This project ranks the UK's six big power companies on the basis of their efforts to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, and invest in renewable energy programmes and energy efficiency measures. The aims of the ranking exercise were to: influence the behaviour of the large power companies, and less directly that of consumers and potential shareholders; increase the profile of the issue in the public and political domain; and engage the big UK power companies. The ranking exercise was carried out by an independent research consultancy, with informal peer review, in order to give it greater credibility. The WWF UK climate change team then publicised the results and used them as a campaign tool. This example demonstrates an intervention that targets different parts of the production consumption chain, attempts to engage the target audience (power companies), and also attempts to influence the wider political and social context.

Box 4: Envirowise – dedicated support programme for improving resource efficiency in businesses

Envirowise is a Government programme that provides practical support for UK businesses to improve their environmental performance and resource efficiency. The programme attempts to engage businesses by demonstrating how resource efficiency can improve competitiveness. The programme provides tailored information, advice and hands-on support to help businesses reduce all aspects of their environmental impact. This support is delivered through: a helpline giving confidential advice on resource efficiency; free on-site visits to help businesses identify areas where they can improve resource efficiency, and suggest actions; events, including workshops, seminars and major exhibitions; a website with practical advice and information, including case studies, best practice guides and benchmarking tools.

See our main report for other relevant examples from our study.

Step 6: Tailoring approaches to specific circumstances

A key finding from the study was that **even seemingly closely related behaviours are likely to work in different ways** – pro-environmental behaviours are extremely context- and audience-specific. Therefore, for each specific intervention it will be necessary to specify exactly which behaviours, or aspects of a behaviour, you want to target, who an intervention will be aimed at, and the context in which this is to be done.

Each intervention will need adapting and refining in practice, if possible with input from the target audience. Even where you are applying models that have been developed for specific behaviours, or interventions that have been successfully used before, the different context and audience need to be taken into account each time (see Box 5).

Policy example: sustainable resource use in business and other organisations

As part of our current example, we may decide that we need to engage business leaders and provide practical support to help their businesses become more resource efficient. Different businesses will need different approaches – for example, some business sectors may be convinced of the advantages of improved environmental performance and engaged in the process of improving resource efficiency, while others (perhaps Small and Medium Sized Enterprises, as discussed above) may be less convinced of the advantages and a long way from starting to make improvements to their practices.

You will need to specify which businesses you are targeting, or at least acknowledge that different target businesses will need different approaches to engagement and different types of support. You would also want to engage the specific audiences that you decided to target in order to find out more about drivers and barriers for change in their businesses, and what support would be most appropriate.

Relevant findings from our study include:

- **social marketing principles could provide a useful framework for targeting specific audiences and behaviours.** For example, they offer a staged approach to developing change interventions, and a technique of subdividing target audiences (French and Blair Stevens, 2005);
- a number of our practical case studies illustrate how it is important to tailor interventions to specific audiences and situations, with substantial investment often being needed to engage different audiences and develop approaches appropriate to the specific context – a single model cannot be successfully ‘parachuted in’ each time. Box 5 contains a practice example from our study which indicates that a systematic approach at different levels may be required;
- **some individuals or organisations are more important than others in spreading change.** For instance, on the individual level, formal and informal ‘champions’ encourage other people, and the organisations in which they work, to adopt more environmentally-friendly behaviours. Engaging, and nurturing, key individuals or organisations may be more effective in bringing about system-wide change than targeting the behaviour of all individuals or organisations.

4. Policy implications

Box 5 – The Sustainable Hospital Food project: tailoring an approach to different situations

The Sustainable Hospital Food Project demonstrates a tailored approach to delivering a behaviour change intervention in different situations. The project was designed to increase the amount of local, seasonal and organic food used in four London hospitals. The project was delivered by dedicated project staff who carried out intensive hands-on work to develop a suitable, tailored, approach with each hospital, working closely with hospital caterers and procurement managers as well as producers, suppliers, wholesalers, patients and staff. After detailed research into how food was procured in the four hospitals, the main focus for the project workers was to act as 'go-betweens' to identify potential suppliers who could meet the hospitals' needs for produce and then work to get their produce to the hospitals. In addition, the project staff carried out other tailored work in each hospital such as: work with hospital dieticians to redesign the hospital menus; training for hospital caterers and small suppliers; promotional events; monitoring progress and impact.

Step 7: Understanding your circle of influence and working with others

As discussed above, it is necessary to recognise that you will be unable to do everything. As part of developing a package of interventions that you feel will deliver change, you need to consider what is within your power (or resources – including time, money and manpower) to influence.

Key tools for extending your influence are likely to include partnership and devolving responsibility. Policy-makers may be well placed to take an overview role. Even if you are unable to exert an influence at all the points that may be desirable to influence a pro-environmental behaviour, if you understand the full picture, you may be able to work with or support others who can help fill in the gaps.

For example:

- our review of policy tools included a finding about the value of devolving delivery of behaviour change initiatives to local organisations that may have a better understanding of local audiences and contexts, and represent a more accessible point of engagement than central Government;
- our investigation of practical case studies included a review of the ways in which policy-makers can support others to develop behaviour change initiatives;
- if you have worked collaboratively with the change 'actors' and other interested parties throughout the process of designing the interventions, you will be well placed to identify delivery partners.

Policy example: sustainable resource use in business and other organisations

Defra will not be able to directly deliver initiatives to influence, for example, businesses, their customers and the context in which they act, all on its own. A successful package of interventions will inevitably involve influencing practitioners indirectly and devolving delivery. A clear overview of what is needed, combined with clever use of policy tools available could mobilise change without the need for extensive direct intervention. For example:

- the Market Transformation Programme, that supports policy-making by Government to increase the sustainability of products, is delivered by a consortium of contractors that provide the necessary specialist expertise (for example the Building Research Establishment);
- the WWF power company ranking project used current UK energy policy as a reference point;
- Energy Efficiency Advice Centres, that encourage and support resource efficiency by businesses and households, are independent but were developed by the Energy Saving Trust, itself set up and part-funded by Government.

Step 8: Setting up a process to achieve change

Change is better understood as an ongoing looped process rather than a linear one with a clear end-point. Any changes that are achieved, or naturally changing circumstances, will themselves change the behaviour in question. In a simple example, promoting energy issues could change social attitudes to energy saving. In turn this may lead to legislation or changes in fuel costs which will then further change household energy behaviours.

Interventions need to take these dynamic aspects of behaviour into account and should aim to achieve change on an ongoing basis, not at a concrete end point. A flexible approach with monitoring, evaluation and feedback that can influence an initiative is likely to be most successful.

Monitoring, evaluation and feedback should be built in from the start, and involve delivery partners and the target audience who we are trying to influence.

Step 9: Put the task in a wider context

Ultimately we are concerned with influencing pro-environmental behaviours in order to address pressing, massive global environmental threats such as global warming. Given this wider picture, it is essential that interventions and policies as a whole work in the same direction – think beyond the specific behaviour and intervention you are working on. Are there any other policy areas where clashes or synergies may occur? Look beyond the UK to include European and global environmental policy.

Policy example: sustainable resource use in business and other organisations

What other policies from different areas might impact on resource use behaviours in business and other organisations? For example: policies and programmes to support UK business competitiveness; economic policies that influence resource availability and pricing; economic policies to encourage consumption; and product regulations.

4. Policy implications

In summary:

- **Unpick and Understand** the behaviour(s) you want to influence: what different elements are involved?, how do the behaviours work?, and what could influence them?;
- **Pick and Mix** interventions that can interact to achieve change (taking care to avoid common pitfalls);
- **Talk and Listen** to the people or organisations you want to change;
- **Tailor** each intervention to the specific audience, behaviour and circumstances;
- **Know your strengths and involve others** – your direct impact will be limited, but you can influence and engage others to help out;
- **Keep it up, and keep learning** – design an ongoing process to change behaviours over time, with constant feedback;
- **Bigger picture** – remember why you are doing it and make sure everything pulls in the same direction.

5. Supplementary information

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Further information:

- Energy Savings Trust: Energy Efficiency Advice Centres – <http://www.est.org.uk/myhome/>
- Envirowise – www.envirowise.gov.uk
- Interface Ltd – <http://www.interfacesustainability.com/>
- The Market Transformation Programme – www.mtprog.com/
- The Sustainable Hospital Food Project – http://www.sustainweb.org/hospital_index.asp
- WWF Ranking Power – <http://worldwildlife.org/climate/publications/rankingpower.pdf>

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