



European Union
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Investing in jobs and skills

Sustainable Development in ESF 2007-2013

Lessons learned and
issues to consider for the next programme

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Introduction

This report aims to highlight:

- the approach taken to mainstream sustainable development in ESF during the current (2007-2013) programme period;
- case studies and examples of successful projects that had an environmental focus during the current programme;
- some of the key `lessons learned' from mainstreaming the sustainable development cross-cutting theme during the current programme; and
- issues that need to be considered for the new programme when promoting the sustainable development.

When considering lessons learned and recommendations for the future, the report draws upon the key findings and recommendations from GHK's national evaluation of sustainable development in ESF, "Evaluation of sustainable development and green jobs" (published in June 2011) as well as informal, anecdotal feedback from: CFO staff; provider staff; members of the ESF Sustainable Development sub-committee; and officials from DCLG.

A full copy of GHK's evaluation report is available at the following web link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/european-social-fund-evaluation-of-sustainable-development-and-green-jobs-rr75>

Our approach to mainstreaming sustainable development during the 2007-2013 programme period

What is sustainable development?

Sustainable development can be defined as:

"Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

(Brundtland Commission Report, "Our Common Future", 1987)

Sustainable development can only be achieved by designing policies and delivery arrangements which create a balance between economic, social and environmental concerns.

Under the structural fund regulations, the ESF programme has to ensure that, 'the implementation of the programme will take account of environmental concerns and respect the principles of sustainable development'.

It is very important that all partners involved in delivering ESF understand that sustainable development, like all of the regulatory cross-cutting themes, is subject to audit.

However, sustainable development is not just a regulatory requirement. There is a strong business case that can be made for adopting sustainable approaches to delivering services. A sustainable approach to delivery can save money by minimising waste management etc and reducing energy bills. It can also promote a positive image of the organisation which, in turn, can help it win contracts for future services.

How was sustainable development defined in ESF?

In the operational context of ESF, sustainable development was defined as development which provides:

- skills that businesses demand and require – now and in the future (support for the economy by expanding the labour market);
- opportunities to allow everyone to fulfil their potential (support for social justice); and
- environmental protection and enhancement through the delivery of projects (support for the environment).

The strategic aims of ESF are to promote jobs and skills and to do so by targeting those with greatest need. These aims help to ensure that the first two of the three strands of sustainable development described above are at the forefront of the programme (with employment as a route out of poverty and the provision of skills training to support and sustain business). Legal and regulatory requirements concerning the promotion of equality and human rights also help to reinforce the social justice strand.

Given that two of the three strands of sustainable development are already inherent to the focus and delivery of the ESF programme, the main focus for sustainable development mainstreaming work in the current programme has been on promoting the third strand of environmental protection and enhancement.

What was the operational approach to mainstreaming sustainable development?

A dual approach to mainstreaming sustainable development was taken which aimed to: (i) ensure compliance with EC regulatory requirements; and (ii) as support the development of green skills and jobs.

The ESF programme's dual approach to promoting sustainable development:

- required all CFO providers to have environmental SD policies and plans (horizontal mainstreaming); and
- provided support for a number of projects that had a specific environmental focus by promoting green skills and green jobs (vertical mainstreaming).

The detailed approach to mainstreaming ESF was agreed by the ESF sustainable development sub-committee of the PMC who prepared and monitored the programme's sustainable development mainstreaming strategy. Annual progress reports were published on the ESF website.

It is important to understand that sustainable development can operate at different 'levels' within the two extremes of the dual approach described above. For example, although all providers are required to have sustainable development policies and plans (horizontal mainstreaming) and some providers may deliver highly specialised environmentally focused projects (vertical mainstreaming), it is possible and desirable for projects to incorporate an environmental element into their project delivery – for example, by including green skills training modules as part of a qualification or course. It is important that skills providers give trainees the skills they need as we move into a Low Carbon Economy. Ideally, there should be a module, or modules, in all courses covering key sustainability issues which relate to the subject. We could call this 'diagonal mainstreaming'.

Sustainable development policies and plans

All ESF providers were required to consider how they delivered their services in terms of trying to reduce negative impacts and increase positive impacts on the environment. The ESF guidance manuals explain the main areas that need to be covered and in order to meet these requirements, CFO providers were required to 'take the environment into account' by:

- preparing environmental sustainable development policies; and
- preparing and delivering sustainable development implementation plans which aimed to turn the project's commitments to supporting sustainable development into action.

The policies and implementation plans were expected to cover basic environmental issues such as:

- ensuring that project waste is disposed of legally;
- reducing energy consumption;
- promoting waste management including recycling; and
- considering ways in which green transport / public transport / car sharing for staff could be promoted.

The policies and plans were expected to last for the duration of the provider's contract and providers were asked to aim for 'continuous improvement'.

Although the guidance set out the main areas that the policies and plans had to cover, it was largely non-prescriptive in terms of detailed requirements. The intention was for individual providers to produce a proportionate response which 'made sense' according to their individual circumstances.

CFO providers were required to produce these policies and implementation plans within 26 week of starting their projects. The CFOs procurement and contract monitoring management systems helped ensure that policies and plans were produced and implemented.

Examples of ESF projects that had a strong environmental focus - whilst supporting business and promoting social inclusion

The ESF sustainable development strategy aimed to support a number of projects that had an environmental focus through both the innovative transnational mainstreaming strand of funding as well as by funding projects that promoted 'green skills and jobs' via Priorities 1,2 4 and 5 where appropriate.

The following project examples show how supporting business and protecting the environment can be highly compatible and mutually beneficial:

(i) Rezolve Kernow Ltd and Cornwall College Group – Environmental Skills Network (ESN)

The Skills Funding Agency CFO in Cornwall used ESF Convergence funds to help set up the Environmental Skills Network (ESN) which offered training support to environmental goods and service companies, as well as bespoke environmental training to businesses in any sector. ESN is also a delivery partner in Key Sectors, the Learning Partnership for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, which works with 13 sector organisations and other local partners to help engage businesses in workforce development activity.

The ESN also provides low carbon training and consultancy services to all businesses to help them compete in the emerging low carbon resource efficient economy.

ESN also works in partnership with the Cornwall College to help with the delivery of high level environmental skills.

The ESN supported over 200 participants and 135 companies.



(ii) Gateway to Suscon – North West Kent College

The Gateway to Suscon project operated between October 2009 and March 2011 and received just under £2million of ESF support. The project was led by North West Kent College.

The main aim of the project was to work with the construction industry and learning providers in the public and private sectors to help develop an integrated and highly flexible approach to training that equipped workers in the construction sector with green skills.

The project worked closely with key construction companies such as Bovis and Wilmott Dixon to help develop a flexible, RIBA- accredited modular training matrix covering subjects such as: energy efficiency; sustainable materials; climate change adaptation. The project also worked closely with key training organisations that were able to deliver the training.

Over 300 SMEs signed up to the project and almost 2000 individuals were supported (including 700 who were unemployed).

(iii) Eco Advantage

The Eco Advantage project, led by Medway Council aimed to develop, pilot and mainstream short training programmes aimed at front-line staff within businesses. Basingstoke Council helped develop training on carbon management with a follow up course after 6 months. Over 55 SMEs and 70 members of staff received training support.

The Eco Advantage project worked with Basingstoke and Dean Council to help set up a sustainable business partnership. Over 200 businesses have signed up to the network which has quarterly meetings covering topics such as the business benefits of using sustainable supply chains and sustainable logistics.

Using the environment as a resource to promote social enterprises and social justice

(i) Impact Housing – Greenways to work

The Greenways to Work project was delivered from August 2009 to July 2012 and received over £800,000 of ESF funding. The project delivered training in three main areas: recycling; renewable technology; and energy efficiency.

One of the main aims of the project was to reduce fuel poverty for residents in its housing association accommodation. The project offered training to its own staff as well as frontline social care staff to help equip them with the skills to provide advice to residents on how to make their homes more fuel efficient.

The project also offered free training aimed at local construction and plumbing companies teaching them installation techniques for solar voltaic cells, domestic heat pumps and solar thermal hot water systems. The key driver behind this training was that, once the employees and companies were trained and accredited, they become eligible to help their customers obtain free Government grants for installation of energy saving equipment.

Impact Housing also used ESF funding to help train staff in its four recycling centres. This money has been used to up-skill exiting staff as well as create work placements within the sector.

The project has also supported a new and developing industry – wood fuel. The project has worked with Cumbria Woodlands to help develop a suite of training and development activities to support the development of this nascent industry – which has been identified as a key growth sector in Cumbria.

(ii) Recycling Lives

Recycling Lives was a delivery partner of Achieve North West (funded by NOMS CFO). Recycling Lives is a recycling and waste management firm which has an annual turnover of over £20 million per year and employs around 200 people.

Both parts of the Recycling Lives business model support each other: the commercial side provides financial support for the charitable side as well as offering employment opportunities for offenders, homeless people and people who are multiply disadvantaged. The charitable side of the business is used to provide evidence of the organisation's commitment to corporate social responsibility which has contributed to the company's success in being awarded a number of contracts.

The Recycling Lives offers employability skills and 13- week work placements at its recycling centre with job offers being made to successful participants.

The project has found that training people outside of the classroom has been key to the success of this project – given that many of the people engaged in the project have had poor experiences of formal education in the past. Recycling Lives provides an environment where learners can progress.



(iii) NOMS – Merseyside Probation Trust – Merseystride project

NOMS CFO has used ESF to support the Merseyside Probation Trust's Merseystride project. This project is an innovative social enterprise project based in the heart of Liverpool and targets community payback offenders who are furthest away from the labour market. These offenders are trained to recycle, repair and assemble flat-pack furniture that is then sold through their retail show room. The Merseystride project offers a range of course and NVQs covering all aspects of the organisation. The volunteers also build-up credits to assemble their own furniture supplied to Merseystride to take home.

The project is based in a deprived area of Liverpool and the furniture is sold at 60% of the recommended retail price. It has been a successful project, with 80% of participants moving into permanent employment, further education or training following their 6 month employment contract. 72 offenders have participated in the project with a 97% completion rate.

(iv) The Garden Farm – CARE Farming (North East Derbyshire)

The Garden Farm is another example of how ESF can promote social inclusion by supporting the development of skills for young people and adults out of work, by making use of the area's natural capital. This approach is particularly effective when traditional 'classroom' environments have failed.

Investment from ESF has been used to promote the therapeutic use of farms to provide health and support services to vulnerable people, through the provision of training and skills development which targets young people and adults not in education, training or employment, and includes support for those with mental health issues.

The Care Farm approach supports an individual's access to employment and training or life experience opportunities through active participation in land management activities. Care farming has additional benefits for both the business and the environment. For example, it has contributed to an increase in turnover for the farm enterprise of £25,000 by diversifying farm income streams and has supported improved environmental management on the

overall farm holding, as well as extending hedgerow and grassland management for biodiversity.

The project engaged 25 young people and adults and created 1.5 employment roles of the farm. 10 young people and adults progressed into further education or training.

Some of the key lessons learned from mainstreaming sustainable development during 2007-2013 ESF programme

Sustainable Development Policies and Plans

It was clear from the experience of trying to mainstream sustainable development during the 2000-2006 ESF programme that the policy and plan requirement had to be established in the procurement, contract schedules and contract management arrangements from 'day one' of the programme. These requirements cannot be 'bolted-on' after contracts have been agreed.

DWP CFO for example built the requirements into their contract schedules and contract monitoring arrangements before the programme started and this approach was highly successful in ensuring that ESF-supported projects and match funded projects alike had SD policies and plans.

The ESF Managing Authority set up an ESF technical assistance project to help fund the development of a policy and plan toolkit that could be used by providers and contract monitoring managers alike. The TA project also helped fund a series of training workshops for Managing Authority and CFO staff to help develop their understanding of what sustainable development meant and what was required.

GHK's national evaluation of sustainable development in ESF included a sample survey of 50 projects. The survey found that:

- Virtually all projects had sustainable development policies in place, although one in five did not have sustainable development plans. These policies and plans often pre-dated the current programme, and were driven by requirements other than ESF. Nevertheless, compliance had provided positive impacts for projects including an increased awareness of the importance of minimising their environmental impacts and also raising the importance of sustainability issues within their organisations. (It should be noted that the number of development plans increased to almost 100% in the two years after the survey).
- Projects tended to have a practical (e.g. recycling, transport) rather than a holistic view of sustainable development. While most were satisfied with the way sustainable development was introduced to them, one in five described being unclear as to what sustainable development meant.
- The increased profile of sustainable development in the current ESF programme had impacted on projects awareness, priorities and practical actions.

It should be noted that the decision to make sustainable development policies and plans a contractual requirement in DWP CFO's ESF provision was extended to the entire range of DWP domestic match funded programmes as well. The standard contractual clauses were amended to take the ESF requirement into account and, for the first time ever, domestic human resource-focused programmes delivered by DWP had to incorporate the use of sustainable development policies and plans. Prior to this, sustainable procurement had been limited to the procurement of goods, materials and accommodation services. Similar approaches were taken by the Skills Funding Agency CFO and NOMs CFO which meant that sustainable development was embedded into the procurement and contract management systems.

This contractual approach was reinforced by the Managing Authority who undertook Article 13 audits to check that projects were complying with requirements.

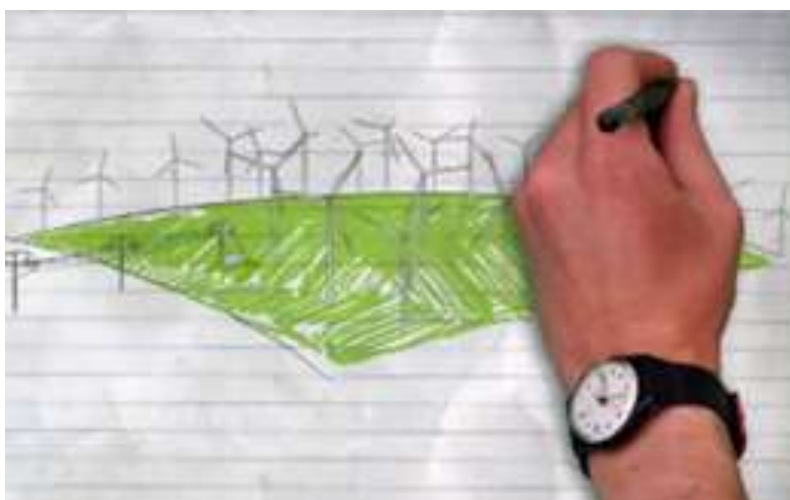
The GHK evaluation of sustainable development in ESF concluded that whilst sustainable development had become a highly visible theme in the ESF programme the process followed by many CFOs to monitor the implementation of sustainable development plans was often piecemeal and light touch and CFOs faced challenges in monitoring plans, in the absence of quantified measures or good practice examples.

In order to make the monitoring of the policies and plans more robust, DWP responded to the report by developing the ESF 8 checklist, which was based on the toolkit that was developed as part of the ESF Technical Assistance-funded training. The toolkit and checklist have, in turn, informed the good practice check list in Annex 1 of this report.

GHK's evaluation found that efforts to increase the knowledge and capability of MA and CFO staff to provide support have been successful with the sustainable development toolkit and training being seen as useful and valuable. GHK noted that the ongoing changes in the ESF structure (for example, closure of Government Offices) risked losing skills and knowledge.

- GHK's evaluation report recommended that commissioners and providers of ESF activity should continue to be supported in understanding the requirements for environmental sustainability in ESF and in developing policies and plans. GHK's evaluation report also recommended extending the use of the ESF sustainable development toolkit, providing further training – and extending support to providers, possibly through local

In response to the findings above, DWP Commercial Directorate and DWP CFO contract monitoring officers in DWP produced a new template for checking policies and plans which included examples of continuous assessment. This checklist was cleared and approved by the Managing Authority and was presented to the SD sub committee.



Specialist projects with a strong environmental focus

The GHK evaluation of sustainable development in ESF found that many of the programme stakeholders interviewed during their study showed a variable understanding of what was meant by the term 'green skills' and 'green jobs'.

The GHK report recommends that a more specific definition with illustrative examples be provided to partners in future guidance materials. Annex 2 of this report provides further information on green skills and how they are incorporated into qualifications

The GHK evaluation found that there were only around 30 projects that could be considered as having an environmental focus or specialism and their report made a number of recommendations, including:

- considering a discrete strand of activity within the next programme dedicated to sustainable development activities;
- promoting sustainable development projects alongside other ESF projects in future guidance materials;
- emphasising the expectation, through guidance for the next programme period, that vertical projects will be actively promoted within each region.

Issues to be considered for the new ESF programme(2014-2020)

Mainstreaming sustainable development needs to begin before the programme even starts

It is vital that sustainable development requirements are integrated into the operational programme, programme delivery manuals and also the contract schedules for ESF and all match-funded programmes and activities before the programme starts.

Mainstreaming sustainable development in 2007-2013 was made considerably easier by doing this (compared to 2000-2006 ESF programme, where it was treated as a `bolt-on' to exiting requirements).

Policies and plans

Annex 1 of this report provides simplified guidance for providers and is largely based on a checklist that was produced by DWP CFO as well as a toolkit that was funded by ESF Technical Assistance and produced by ECOTEC (ECORYS).

The simplified guidance can be tailored by CFOs and other funding bodies to make it more relevant or proportionate for their providers where this is appropriate to do so.

Ideally, training support should be made available to project commissioners and other key Managing Authority and LEP staff – possibly via a technical assistance project where match funding is available.

Using simple checklists is easier for contract managers and contract monitoring officers too, and this is especially important given the reduction in resources available in recent years.

It is important that project commissioners understand the variety of specialist project types that can be funded under ESF and that the specifications they produce can at least enable such a variety of projects to be funded.

Specialist projects

Project commissioners need to be supported in terms of understanding the importance of sustainable development and how this should be promoted through the project commissioning / tender process.

Project commissioners should promote sustainable development when drafting the specifications for tenders, encouraging project applicants to have an environmental focus whilst also promoting jobs, skills, or tackling social inclusion issues.

Project commissioners need to highlight the highly beneficial impact that using the environment as a resource can have on difficult to help groups – especially those who prefer to learn outside a classroom environment



It is important that project commissioners, in the next programme, also enable ESF activities to complement activities funded under the 'sustainability' thematic objectives delivered by other programmes whenever it is possible to and appropriate to do so.

Project commissioners need to explicitly encourage specialist environmental projects for the extra added value that they add by supporting business, social justice and the environment.

The following list of river stewardship projects were NOT funded ESF but, potentially provide examples of the types of environmentally-focused projects that might be funded by ESF in the future programme (which will be subject to usual open competitive tendering arrangements).

River stewardship provides young people with stepping stones into employment

The case studies described below have been delivered and supported by an emerging northern river stewardship network. This network brings together partners who work with young people to improve river environments through projects that develop skills, experience and confidence and provide stepping stones to employment.

- In Sheffield the River Stewardship Company (RSC) has been established by public and third sector partners to improve the way that our river environments are managed, protected and enjoyed. The RSC uses a social enterprise model to deliver 'little and often care of the river' financed through public sector commissions, private sector contracts and externally funded projects. These commissions, contracts and projects are delivered through programmes that revitalise our rivers, engage local people, grow skills and provide stepping stones into employment, education and training.
Contact helen.batt@the-rsc.co.uk
- IMPACT is a pilot project delivered by Lancashire Wildlife Trust in partnership with the Environment Agency, United Utilities and Heritage Lottery Fund. IMPACT works with young people aged 16—25 year olds to improve skills and help young people's progression towards employment. IMPACT is based in Bolton, Greater Manchester, and delivers environmental improvements on the River Croal and its tributaries. 60% of participants have progressed into education employment or training.
Contact jhall@lancswt.org.uk
- The Skill Mill Ltd is a new social enterprise designed to provide training and employment opportunities for young offenders. Ex offenders take part in 'little and often' flood risk management and river care throughout Tyne and Wear, such as clearing debris and excavating channels to improve drainage. The Skill Mill has been formed by a partnership led by Newcastle Youth Offending Team and the Environment Agency, bringing together public, private and voluntary and Community organisations. A pilot programme worked with over 70 young people and reduced re offending rates by 16%.
Contact david.parks@newcastle.gov.uk

- The Environment Agency has been working in partnership with the North York Moors National Park Authority (NPA) to commission natural flood risk management and river care through the NPA's award winning apprenticeship scheme. The scheme provides 12 young people, currently unemployed, with an opportunity to develop skills, to work alongside expert practitioners, and to acquire National Diploma in Environmental Conservation through a local learning provider.

Contact b.mclinden@northyorkmoors.org.uk



- Blue Sky is a social enterprise that reduces re-offending by offering employment to ex-offenders. In Greater Manchester the Environment Agency has worked with Blue Sky to deliver local flood risk improvements. The partnership worked well and the Environment Agency was impressed by the quality of Blue Sky's work and their commitment to health & safety and customer service. This partnership helped the Environment Agency to improve local environments in ways that improve social inclusion.

Contact Venetia.Knight@groundwork.org.uk

The Environment Agency has supported the river stewardship network and has helped to share learning and good practice in order to encourage joint working and to grow sustainable social enterprises in urban catchments across the North. This approach to river stewardship can help LEPs and city regions to deliver new jobs, apprenticeships and training opportunities for young people whilst at the same time improving the ways our rivers are managed, protected and enjoyed.

Keeping sustainable development 'on the agenda'

It is useful to have a sustainable development mainstreaming strategy for the programme and to publicise success.

The annual ESF Leader Award scheme for sustainable development has proven to be very successful and has helped generate positive publicity and case studies of exemplar projects that have 'gone the extra mile' in promoting sustainable development. Such an award scheme could continue into the next programming period.

Annex 1: Guidance for producing a sustainable development policy and plan

This guidance aims to help projects draw-up their sustainable development policies and plans in line with EU regulatory requirements.

The guidance begins by explaining the minimum requirements in terms of what needs to be done within the first 26 weeks of starting delivery of their ESF or match-funded contract.

The guidance then provides ideas for developing the mainstreaming implementation plans further during the life of the contract, given that there is an expectation that providers will aim to continuously improve their implementation plans during the life of the ESF or match-funded contract.

Providers will need to check their ESF or match funding contract schedule for precise requirements. This Annex should be used as a general guide only.

The minimum requirement:

- (i) a policy expressing a public commitment to promote sustainable development and
- (ii) a sustainable development implementation plan to explain how that commitment will be translated into action,

Each provider must produce a sustainable development policy which is publicly available to all staff and participants alike. The Sustainable Development policy is a public commitment to deliver ESF or match funded activity in a way which minimises impact on the environment.

The policy statement should include:

- a general statement of policy recognising the importance of SD and committing the organisation / provider to promote SD;
- confirmation of intent to comply with relevant legislation;
- a commitment to continuously improve; and
- a sign-off by the CEO or highest official within the organisation

The scope of the policy should cover:

- legal compliance with waste regulations;
- waste minimisation;
- energy conservation;
- promotion of public / green transport; and
- staff awareness raising of environmental issues in relation to the project.

(see website links at end of annex for further information on reducing waste and energy)

It is important that the policy should apply to the whole organisation. Contractors / sub contractors involved in delivering ESF activities should be encouraged to have similar policies and plans.

The policy should also include commitments to

- communicate the policy to staff and participants (e.g. via induction training etc)
- communicate to suppliers/ contractors (and to persuade them to have similar policies)
- to regularly monitor progress towards the key aims and objectives as set out in the accompanying implementation plan
- a commitment to report on progress made to ESF / Match funded contract managers as well as to key managers staff and participants

The following tables are based upon checklists developed by the DWP CFO and provides a useful reminder of the key elements of a sustainable development policy. In order to show progress over time (continuous improvement) the checklist suggest that the organisation establishes some simple baselines which explain the current levels of energy usage / recycling / paper purchase etc. For example, a provider may want to asses how many boxes of paper it typically uses per month or assess its average energy bill. The organisation can then judge whether, over time, it is reducing paper usage or energy. Projects may also wish to consider the costs of energy consumption, recycling and waste minimisation in order to help reduce costs of their project delivery.

It is important that the principle of proportionality is applied to the policies and plans produced. The provider's Sustainable Development Policy Statement and Sustainable Development Plan should reflect the size of their organisation, the resources they have and the contract that they are delivering to DWP.

Sustainability Policy

	Criteria	Achieved (Y/N) <i>(TO BE COMPLETED BY PROVIDER)</i>	Evidence provided/additional comments <i>(TO BE COMPLETED BY PROVIDER)</i>	Achieved (Y/N), actions required and/or additional comments <i>(TO BE COMPLETED BY CMO)</i>
1	The provider has produced a written Sustainable Development Policy Statement that is specific to the contract and includes details from all of the current sub contractors involved in delivery of the contract			
2	The Sustainable Development Policy Statement confirms that each organisation involved in delivery of the contract disposes of waste using a registered waste collector (either in written statement and/or by submitting waste invoices/certificates etc as evidence)			
3	The Sustainable Development Policy Statement confirms that each organisation involved in delivery of the contract observes and complies with the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) regulations (either in written statement and/or by submitting relevant invoices/certificates as evidence)			

Sustainable Development Plan

For the sake of clarity, it would be helpful if the sustainable development implementation plan was set out as a simple action plan, linking aims to objectives and also explaining who will carry out the action and by when.

The following checklist should be considered when drawing up the sustainable development implementation plan:

4	The provider has produced a written Sustainable Development Plan that is specific to the contract and includes details from all of the current sub contractors involved in delivery of the contract			
5	The Sustainable Development Plan provides details as to how each organisation involved in delivery of the contract will: a) minimise waste produced and promote recycling b) minimise energy consumption c) minimise use of travel and promote use of public transport where travel is unavoidable			

6	<p>The Sustainable Development Plan contains (for each organisation involved in delivery of the contract):</p> <p>d) a baseline assessment of current position in terms of waste minimisation, recycling and energy consumption (where available – may not be available if the provider is in shared accommodation or pays a single rent/service charge to their landlord)</p> <p>e) annual estimates of the progress of sustainable development actions (either a written statement or examples of the relevant targets etc that organisations have within their organisations)</p> <p>f) details of how staff awareness of sustainability will be increased in line with the Sustainable Development Plan (details of staff communications, training etc)</p>			
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2) Best Practice Evidence

The following table provides some **examples** of best practice activity that a provider (and other organisations involved in delivery of the contract) may demonstrate which shows their commitment to continuous improvement in sustainable development (i.e. over and above the minimum/contractual requirement). There is an **expectation/aspiration** that providers will strive towards continuous improvement throughout the duration of the contract. The table below should be used to record all best practice activity that the provider demonstrates – **this can be either from the list of examples provided below or additional/alternative examples that are provided by the provider.**

Examples of best practice activity	Achieved (Y/N)	Additional comments/evidence (e.g. Provider has provided a copy of their organisational level policy)
Provider takes part in the annual ESF SD mainstreaming 'Leader' awards		
Provider has an organisational level sustainable development policy		
Provider has an organisational level sustainable development strategy		
The provider's organisational level policy and/or strategy links with their other organisational level strategies (such as Corporate Strategy, Communications Strategy, Commercial Strategy etc)		
The provider's organisational level policy and/or strategy is supported by senior management and driven down from the very top of the organisation		

The provider's organisational level policy and or/strategy is scrutinised by an external party		
Provider has a named Sustainable Development Champion in the organisation		
Provider has a Sustainable Development Champion who has received some relevant training		
All staff in the organisation have received sustainability related training and refresher training		
Sustainability related objectives are included in key staff's personal objectives		
Provider publicises their sustainability related achievements		
Provider identifies sustainability risks in their organisation and has a process to manage the risks		
Provider communicates sustainability principles and aims to its sub contractors and suppliers		
Provider has targets to improve sustainability aspects with sub contractors and suppliers		
Provider increases awareness of sustainability to those participating in its provision programmes/contracts (e.g. as part of delivering SD modules)		
Provider measures its achievements/performance in sustainability		

Provider benchmarks sustainability performance against other organisations (either in the same sector or more widely)		
Provider holds /is working towards accreditation standards such as the ISO 14000 series of Environmental Management Systems		

Additional/alternative best practice examples provided by the provider

Example of best practice activity	Additional comments/evidence provided

Report title

Providers may find the following organisations/websites useful:

The Carbon Trust

www.carbontrust.co.uk

<http://www.carbontrust.com/resources/guides/energy-efficiency/employee-awareness-and-office-energy-efficiency>

Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP)

www.wrap.org.uk

DirectGov (Environment and Greener Living)

www.direct.gov.uk

Business Link

www.businesslink.gov.uk

ENWORKS

www.enworks.com

Annex 2: Green Skills / Green Jobs

The terms `green jobs' and `green skills' are, like `the green economy', often used to describe a broad spectrum of companies and skill sets. While useful as a shorthand description, to be meaningful, and to enable action to be taken, further explanation is necessary. The most straightforward way to explain these terms is to relate them to the three groups of business described below.

The skills needed by these three groups are quite different. They can best be summarised as follows:

1. Companies whose main business is producing environmental goods and services. This includes companies who produce renewable energy technologies; high energy efficiency equipment; heat pumps and insulation technologies. Companies producing environmental goods and services are likely to have a highly skills workforce. Their skills needs therefore tend to be higher level skills in STEM subjects. It is vital therefore that the focus on STEM qualifications remains high.
2. Companies whose main business is enabling the use of environmental goods and services. This can be further divided into:
 - a. Physical Installation e.g. construction, mechanical and electrical engineers and craft trades
 - b. Professional Services e.g. planners, solicitors, accountants fund managers.

Enabling companies in group (a) often require up skilling to meet the requirements of emerging technologies or accreditation schemes. As these technologies are changing rapidly its challenging for colleges to remain current and close cooperation with manufacturers is needed to ensure courses remain valued in the marketplace.

For enabling companies in group (b) the skills shortage is often due to a lack of familiarity or exposure with the technology or issue at hand; compounded by wider information failure around green issues. This skills shortage needs to be tackled in two ways, firstly relevant degree courses need to incorporate modules which increase understanding of the green economy as it applies to their discipline. Secondly professional membership CPD programmes need to incorporate the green Skills and Knowledge which are pertinent to their profession. This will not only lift the skill level of the profession but it will ensure to remains current in a rapidly changing market. These course offer new markets to training providers

3. All companies, including the two groups identified above.

All companies, irrespective of the nature of their operations need employees who have an understanding of environmental issues as they relate to their role. Such a common understanding enables companies to not only benefit from the improved energy and resource use efficiency within their operations but also to develop and sell goods and services with higher environmental credentials. Sustainable development has an integral role in all areas of society as such it needs to be integrated into all skills training if it is to avoid being perceived as an optional add-on.