

RuSource

the rural information network

RuSource is an Arthur Rank Centre project and is supported by donations and sponsorship.

Briefing 1091

Defra Draft Structural Reform Plan

Summary

The plan aims to help to enhance the competitiveness and resilience of the food chain to ensure a secure, environmentally sustainable and healthy supply of food with improved standards of animal welfare. Secondly to enhance and protect the natural environment by reducing pollution and preventing habitat loss and degradation. Thirdly to create the conditions in which businesses can innovate, invest and grow; encourage businesses, people and communities to manage and use natural resources in a sustainable manner and to reduce waste; and work to ensure that the UK economy is resilient to climate change.

This paper is summarised from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Draft Structural Reform Plan which can be accessed at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/about/what/documents/defra-srp-100716.pdf>

Structural Reform Plans are the key tool of the Coalition Government for making departments accountable for the implementation of the reforms set out in the Coalition Agreement. They replace the old, top-down systems of targets and central micromanagement.

1. Support and develop British farming and encourage sustainable food production

ACTIONS	Start	End
1.1 Drive sustainable food procurement by the Government and the public sector		
i. Introduce new guidance so that departments source food, subject to no overall increase in costs, meeting British or equivalent standards of production (e.g. Red Tractor)	Jan 2011	
1.2 Promote increased domestic food production, and ensure that consumers can be confident about where their food comes from		
i. Use voluntary approach to encourage food retailers and producers to provide more detail on the origins of their produce	Jul 2010	Dec 2010
ii. Evaluate the effectiveness of voluntary approach	Jan 2011	Apr 2011
iii. Publish evaluation and, if necessary, further steps to ensure the greatest possible transparency by food retailers and producers to consumers	May 2011	
1.3 Prepare farming for post-2013 Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reforms		
i. Establish task force to conduct industry-led review of existing farm regulations	Jun 2010	
ii. Publish task force recommendations for a more proportionate system of regulation and enforcement for farming, and begin to implement these recommendations	Apr 2011	

MILESTONES	
A. All departments begin sourcing food meeting British or equivalent standards of production	Jan 2011
B. Recommendations published on the deregulation of farming	Apr 2011
C. Conclusions published on how best to encourage greater transparency around food production	May 2011

ACTIONS	Start	End
iii. Develop affordable measures of support for hill farmers and affordable options for a carefully-managed and science-led policy of badger control in areas of high and persistent levels of bovine TB	Jun 2010	Dec 2011
iv. Assess proposals from the Taylor review on scientific research in agriculture	Aug 2010	
v. Start to implement proposals from the Taylor review	Sep 2010	
vi. Make the case for significant reform of the CAP as part of the EU's negotiations for the period beyond 2013	Oct 2010	Jan 2013
vii. Set out plans on animal disease responsibility sharing	Apr 2011	
1.4 Reform the animal welfare inspection regime		
i. Conduct review of the Animal Welfare Act	Jul 2010	Dec 2010
ii. Publish proposals for the reform of the animal welfare inspection regime, including: (a) plans to reduce the likelihood of low-risk farms being subject to inspection, and (b) plans to maximise the transparency of food producers to food consumers	Dec 2010	

MILESTONES	
D. Proposals to reform the animal welfare inspection regime published	Dec 2010
E. Plans on animal disease responsibility sharing set out	Apr 2011

2. Help to enhance the environment and biodiversity to improve quality of life

ACTIONS	Start	End
2.1 Support the building of the Big Society to enhance the countryside, habitats and urban environment		
i. Review the governance arrangements of National Parks	Jul 2010	Dec 2010
ii. Publish proposals to increase the accountability of National Parks	Jan 2011	
iii. Create a new designation with CLG to protect green areas of particular importance to local communities, modelled on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)	Jul 2010	Dec 2012
iv. Launch national campaign to increase tree-planting by the private sector and civil society	Dec 2010	
2.2 Help communities and wildlife adapt to climate change		
i. Implement the findings of the Pitt Review to improve our flood defences and prevent unnecessary buildings in areas of high flood risk	Jun 2010	May 2015
ii. Assess the scope for actions to offset the impact of development on biodiversity	Jul 2010	Apr 2011
iii. Publish a Natural Environment White Paper, setting out measures to protect wildlife and promote green spaces and wildlife corridors	Apr 2011	
2.3 Spearhead international progress on conservation and endangered species		
i. Agree Marine Policy Statement and publish first draft cut of Marine Conservation Zones	Jul 2010	Apr 2011
MILESTONES		
A. Campaign to increase tree-planting launched	Dec 2010	
B. Proposals to increase accountability of National Parks published	Jan 2011	
C. Natural Environment White Paper published	Apr 2011	

ACTIONS	Start	End
ii. Make the case at Nagoya Summit for ambitious new international targets to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss, setting the tone for subsequent summits	Oct 2010	
iii. Legislate to make it a criminal offence to allow illegal timber to enter the UK market	Nov 2010	Nov 2012
iv. Work to secure changes to the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)	Jan 2011	Oct 2011

MILESTONES		
D. Reformed Common Fisheries Policy agreed (in line with expected EU timetable)		Oct 2011
F. Import of illegal timber made an offence		Nov 2012

3. Support a strong and sustainable green economy, resilient to climate change

ACTIONS	Start	End
3.1 Drive a 'zero waste' agenda		
i. Agree goals for 2014/2020 and set the path towards a 'zero waste' economy through review of waste policies	Jun 2010	Apr 2011
ii. Explore voluntary responsibility deal on waste among businesses	Jul 2010	Apr 2011
iii. Repeal Climate Change Act powers for household charging	Jul 2010	Nov 2011
iv. Set out steps to promote increased energy from waste through anaerobic digestion	Nov 2010	
3.2 Reform the water industry to enhance competition and improve conservation		
i. Publish a White Paper on reform of the water industry to ensure more efficient use of water and to protect poorer households	Jun 2011	
ii. Put required legislation in place	Nov 2011	Nov 2012
3.3 Drive sustainable public sector practice across government		
i. Review current targets on waste reduction in government buildings	Jul 2010	Nov 2010
ii. Decide whether to set new targets on waste reduction in government buildings	Dec 2010	
iii. Publish action plan with DECC and Cabinet Office to ensure government operations and procurement are the greenest ever	Oct 2010	
iv. Publish Government Buying Standards for transport, food, furniture, textiles, gardening services, water-using products and cleaning products and services	Mar 2011	
MILESTONES		
A. Action plan on green government operations published		Oct 2010
B. Waste strategy published, including goals on waste		Apr 2011
C. Government Buying Standards published		Mar 2011
D. Water White Paper published		Jun 2011
E. Climate Change Act powers for household charging repealed		Nov 2011

ACTIONS	Start	End
3.4 Promote a low-carbon and eco-friendly economy		
i. Revise guidance on Impact Assessments, the Green Book and other policy appraisal guidance to take account of sustainability and the value of nature	Jul 2010	Jul 2011
ii. Publish a roadmap with DECC and BIS that provides industry with a clear path to an eco-friendly economy	Dec 2010	
3.5 Support economic growth in rural areas		
i. Work with HMI and DECC to investigate options available to help those in remote rural areas with the cost of fuel	Jun 2010	Mar 2012
ii. Work with DCMS to deliver universal broadband at speeds of 2mbps and stimulate private sector investment to deliver the best superfast broadband network in Europe by 2015	Jul 2010	May 2015

MILESTONES

- | | | |
|----|---|----------|
| F. | Guidance revised on Impact Assessments and the Green Book | Jul 2011 |
| G. | Options for helping with fuel costs in remote rural areas set out | Mar 2012 |

Alan Spedding, 02 August 2010

RuSource briefings provide concise information on current farming and rural issues for rural professionals. They are circulated weekly by email and produced by Alan Spedding in association with the Arthur Rank Centre, the national focus for the rural church. Previous briefings can be accessed on the Arthur Rank Centre website at http://www.arthurrankcentre.org.uk/projects/rusource_briefings/index.html

RuSource is a voluntary project partly supported by donations and sponsorship.

© Alan Spedding 2010. This briefing may be reproduced or transmitted in its entirety free of charge. Where extracts are used, their source must be acknowledged. RuSource briefings may not be reproduced in any publication or offered for sale without the prior permission of the copyright holder.

If you would like to be put on the list for regular briefings or have any other queries about the service contact alan.spedding@btopenworld.com .