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**Sustainability and the Recession**

In the current economic climate where organisations are fully focused on keeping their heads above water, do they have time to worry about being green?

Green options can be cost effective and so can play a role in reducing costs. The UK government continues to provide support and incentives to companies to encourage them to maintain their ‘green’ interests.

The National Business Travel Network (NBTN) – part of the UK Government’s ACT on CO2 campaign is encouraging businesses to implement smart travel plans for staff. These will not only cut costs but also reduce carbon emissions. Examples include:

- Car sharing – saves money on mileage claims and expenses such as parking space maintenance
- Bicycle hire schemes
- Converting the company car fleet to more fuel efficient, greener vehicles
- Flexible and home working

Research carried out by NBTN found that employees would welcome more flexible work travel plans. 28% said it would increase loyalty and 24% felt that it would significantly improve their productivity. This would also lead to cost savings for the organisation.

For further information and advice about work travel plans, please visit [www.nbtn.org.uk](http://www.nbtn.org.uk)

In the UK budget announced on 22 April, more than £10.4bn of extra targeted support in the low carbon sector was provided.

The Secretary of State for the Environment, Hilary Benn welcomed in particular the measures to encourage investment in low carbon jobs and energy generation using organic waste. The Chancellor announced £10 million for anaerobic digestion and waste infrastructure and a continued increase of £8 per tonne per year to the standard rate of landfill tax up to 2013.

Hilary Benn said, “In the UK we produce over 100 million tonnes of organic matter very year that, through anaerobic digestion, could be used to create enough energy to heat and power over two million homes”.

For further information please visit [www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/ad/government](http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/waste/ad/government)

There are legal requirements for recycling packaging, following these will avoid fines and aid sustainability. The UK recycled almost two-thirds of all packaging produced in 2008. More than seven million tonnes of packaging waste of which 6.6 million tonnes were recycled, the equivalent of saving roughly 8.9 million tonnes of CO2

The 2008 packaging recycling and recovery figures can be found at [www.npwd.environment-agency.gov.uk/Public/PublicSummaryData](http://www.npwd.environment-agency.gov.uk/Public/PublicSummaryData)

**A Standard for Market Research Access Panels**

Market Research increasingly uses Access Panels to provide information. Access Panels are made up of a representative set of people who agree to complete questionnaires on various subjects and are often compensated for this. A new ISO standard has been released to support this evolution. It provides definitions



and requirements to increase the quality and efficiency of access panels as well as providing internationally harmonized criteria to facilitate comparison of the results of access panels worldwide.

ISO26362:2009. Access panels in market, opinion and social research – Vocabulary and service requirements, provides definitions and guidelines for good practice, tackling issues such as recruitment, validation of identity, size and profile of panels.

The standard can be used by organisation and professional who own and/or use any type of access panels for market, opinion and social research, whether online (internet) or offline (telephone, face-to-face, etc.)

For further information, please visit [www.iso.ch](http://www.iso.ch)

### **Counterfeiting and Fraud**

It has been said that the last decade has experienced a boom in counterfeit products, which is no longer limited to luxury goods, and currently estimated to represent up to 10% of world trade. In response to this the ISO have set up two new committees to develop standards to tackling counterfeiting of material goods and fraud.

There are hundreds of devices and systems that can be used to authenticate genuine products, but there is no global standard available to help compare the different systems, establish performance criteria and ensure interoperability. An ISO Standard would assist businesses to make an informed choice when selecting the best tools for establishing the authenticity of a product and also help sellers of anti-counterfeiting systems to improve their solutions.

For further information, please visit [www.iso.ch](http://www.iso.ch)

### **Queen's Award for Enterprise**

On 21<sup>st</sup> April, the Queen's birthday, a total of 194 Queen's Awards were announce, the largest number awarded in the 44 years of the

scheme. 135 companies have won Awards for International Trade, 49 for Innovation, and 10 for Sustainable Development. Lord Mandelson, Business Minister, said, "I heartily congratulate all today's winners of the Queen's Awards. These inspirational firms have proved they are amongst Britain's very best businesses. They are flying the flag for British enterprise, innovation and corporate responsibility, both here and abroad. They have achieved the UK's most prestigious standard for business excellence, and set the standard for other businesses to follow as they help lead Britain out of recession".

The full list of winners can be found at [www.queensaward.org.uk](http://www.queensaward.org.uk)

### **National Measurement Infrastructure**

On 1 April 2009, the UK National Weights and Measures Laboratory changed its name to the National Measurement Office. It will continue to be an Executive Agency of the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills and will be responsible for all aspects of the national measurement system, which includes investment in the UK's scientific measurement infrastructure and policy on national legal measurements.

Their principle policy responsibility arises from the Weights and Measures Act 1985 which helps ensure consumers and businesses protected against short measure and other offences.

### **Action on Carbon Emissions**

The UK has become the first country in the world to bind itself to an ambitious long-term framework to limit greenhouse gas emissions. The Chancellor has announced:

- Legally binding carbon budgets for the first three five-year periods 2008-2012, 2013 – 2017 and 2018 – 2022
- A revised target to reduce emissions to at least 34% below 1990 emissions by 2018 – 22
- Aim to meet the carbon budgets announced today through domestic action alone, and



consistent with this, setting a zero limit in the non-traded sector on offsetting through international credits for the first budget period

- Commitment to tighten the budget after Copenhagen this December once we have a global climate change agreement.

It is not only the UK that is taking actions. The ISO held a workshop in March that provided an opportunity to develop an overview of work that has to be done on energy efficiency and for technical experts and public sector decision makers to exchange information and map out the path forward. In particular the, the importance of energy efficiency standardisation was emphasised and how it can support carbon emission reduction by providing internationally agreed metrics.

A full report of the workshop will be available on the ISO Web site [www.iso.ch](http://www.iso.ch), under “Hot topics”, “Energy”

### **E learning Standard**

As the recession continues, many people are looking to improve their skills and one option for this is using e-learning material. The ISO have now released a standard on e-learning that will make it easier to match user needs and preferences with the right educational resources particularly if the user has special requirements.

ISO/IEC 24751:2008, Information technology – individualized adaptability and accessibility in e-learning, education and training, is published in three parts. It offers a framework and reference model, plus “access of all” criteria on personal needs and preferences, and a digital resource description.

For people with disabilities, whose choice of access modalities is restricted, the process of matching a resource with a user requirement is not a matter of convenience or refinement, but one of utmost importance in ensuring access. ISO 24751 will assist in matching individual learner needs in a computer mediated learning

environment with the necessary user interface and resources needed to meet those needs,

For further information, please visit [www.iso.ch](http://www.iso.ch)

### **Biodiversity Indicators**

Biodiversity is the variety of individual species, the genetic diversity within the species and the range of ecosystems that support them. An updated overview of biodiversity in the UK has been published recently. Indicators include; key species, habitats and ecosystems, plant diversity, protected sites and impacts of air pollution. In accessing change since 2000; seven measures show deterioration, 13 show improvement, 10 show little or no overall change. A full list of indicators, including charts, assessments, commentary and data tables, can be found at [www.jncc.gov.uk/biyp](http://www.jncc.gov.uk/biyp)

### **Copyright Tribunal changes**

The Intellectual Property Office recently announced a review of the Copyright Tribunal rules which will make the Tribunal quicker and cheaper to use, particularly for individuals and small businesses.

Key proposals are:

- Streamlining of scales for large-scale litigation in order to reduce costs for parties
- Introduction of a small applications fast track system for cases of low financial value in order to improve accessibility for small businesses and individuals
- Modernisation of the rules, in particular by incorporating case management techniques from the Civil Procedure Rules

For further information contact the IPO on 0207 596 6547