
WRAP AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

Moving to more sustainable patterns of consumption and production is a fundamental requirement for achieving global sustainable development. It aims to drive social and economic improvement within the environmental limits of the planet, by making the use of resources and production of goods more efficient and sustainable; and reducing resource degradation, pollution and waste.

Why was WRAP established?

Business and consumers are not always able to make the right choices and create well-functioning markets that take SCP into account. Governments can provide the conditions to promote SCP by establishing appropriate economic and regulatory frameworks. There is also a role to catalyse collective action, to provide information, and seed money to de-risk investment, and so help business and consumers make choices aligned with SCP.

In the UK, WRAP has this role for governments¹. **WRAP acts as a catalyst, accelerating changes in the behaviour of consumers, public and private sectors in ways that neither governments nor individual companies can.** Our work is based on evidence, identifying where interventions will have the biggest impact, and then engaging with partners to address the failures that prevent markets making sustainable use of resources. Tackling these, in the right order and cost effectively, is essential to effective market operation and has been at the heart of the way WRAP operates. As a result, we have delivered rapid and significant improvements in the sustainability of the UK economy with an excellent return on investment.

What is WRAP and what impact has it had?

WRAP is an independent, not-for-profit company which delivers policy objectives on waste and SCP for Governments. The impact of our work is independently assessed, and has shown that between 2008 and 2011, WRAP has delivered for the UK:

- £2.2 billion economic benefit
- **£18 benefit for every £1 spent by WRAP**
- 6.6 million tonnes (Mt) of CO₂ equivalent emissions avoided
- 12.6 million tonnes (Mt) of waste prevented

Furthermore, since 2003, our work with the recycling and reprocessing sector has resulted in:

- 49 Mt of increased processing capacity
- around £1 billion reduced costs for business and municipalities

The recycling sector now generates more than £13 billion in sales, employs over 40,000 people, and contributes around £3 billion in gross value added to the UK economy. The sector has grown 3 fold since 1998, outstripping growth in the UK economy. Household recycling rates have increased from 11% in 2001 to 43% in 2013 and more than half of business waste is now recycled.

¹ UK Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Scottish Government, Welsh Government, Northern Ireland Executive, London Waste & Recycling Board.

How does WRAP deliver?

WRAP's expertise and track record lie in three key resource intensive sectors:

- **Food and Drink** – 20% of UK carbon footprint, 70% of water footprint
- **Built Environment** – 45% of UK carbon footprint, 60% of UK material use
- **Manufactured Goods** (particularly textiles and electricals) – around 10% of UK carbon footprint, 2 Mt waste to landfill

For each of these sectors, we work on:

- **Product sustainability** - reinventing how we design, produce and sell through encouraging:
 - supply chain collaboration
 - product and process innovation
- **Resource management** - re-defining how we re-use and recycle through encouraging:
 - market and infrastructure development
 - improved collections systems
- **Behaviour change** – rethinking how we buy, use and consume through:
 - consumer campaigns
 - encouraging business collaborative change

These activities have had significant financial and environmental impact. For example:

- Our voluntary agreements have delivered reductions in waste and consistently delivered **>£100 savings per £1 of Government investment**. For example, the Courtauld Commitment, our agreement with grocery retailers and manufacturers, has resulted in 2.3 Mt of food, drink and packaging waste prevented. The benefit (avoided cost) of this prevented waste was around £3.5 billion to business, householders and municipalities.
- Our work on driving innovation in SCP has had significant impacts. For example to increase plastic packaging reprocessing, WRAP brought together retailers, brands, reprocessors, municipalities and equity investors to develop and scale up an innovative process to make food grade plastic resin from waste bottles. With our consumer recycling campaign and financial support to de-risk the early reprocessing plants, the UK has increased the **recycling rate of plastic bottles from 5% in 2000 to 48% in 2011**.
- Our work with consumers has led to sustained behaviour change on recycling through our Recycle Now campaign) and food waste prevention. Our **Love Food Hate Waste campaign** has been instrumental in **reducing consumer food waste by 1.1 Mt (13%)** between 2006/7 and 2010, This waste reduction saved consumers £2.6 billion and reduced carbon emissions 3.6 Mt. Other countries are now using this approach.

We believe that other countries can replicate this approach successfully and welcome the opportunity to discuss how WRAP might help.

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