

Environment Matters – 25 November 2005

Welcome to the latest edition of Aardvark's fortnightly news briefing

- PM 'convinced' on nuclear future** Tony Blair is believed to be convinced over the need for nuclear power to tackle the UK energy crisis. The government is to announce a review of energy policy, including nuclear power, after being urged by business leaders to tackle the UK energy crisis. Concerns have been growing over future power supplies and rising gas costs. ([BBC News 21/11/05](#))
- Renewables market seen leaping by 70% by 2008** The global market for renewable energy technology is expected to soar by 70% over the next three years, according to a new report. Fuel costs, pressure to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and concern over energy security are all driving the market. In addition, there have been significant improvements in efficiency for the main renewable technologies at the same time as oil and gas prices have been rising sharply. Wind energy is the leading technology, followed by solar and biomass. ([World Business Council for Sustainable Development 17/11/05](#))
- Water builds the heat in Europe** Water vapour rather than carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is the main reason why Europe's climate is warming, according to a new study. The scientists say that rising temperatures caused by greenhouse gases are increasing humidity, which in turn amplifies the temperature rise. This is potentially a positive feedback mechanism, which could increase the impact of greenhouse gases such as CO₂. ([IEMA 16/11/05](#))
- Eden Project team plans eco-rainforest in Lancashire** The team of architects behind the Eden Project in Cornwall is planning to turn a Lancashire rubbish dump into a tropical rainforest which would heat itself with decomposing garden and kitchen waste. The £150m proposal includes one of England's highest waterfalls, walkways through the tree tops and possibly Europe's biggest compost heap, capable of using most of the green waste of a city the size of Manchester. ([The Guardian 21/11/05](#))
- Waters recovering from acid rain** Lower emissions of sulphur and nitrogen dioxide are helping UK waters recover from acid rain but more needs to be done to sustain the improvement, according to an Environment Department report this week. The report shows that the amount of acidic sulphur in UK waters has generally halved in the last 15 years. ([ENDS Report 17/11/05](#))

Latest News from the Aardvark Team

- The Aardvark team have recently completed a soil management programme for Tesco's new 4,384m² store in Tiverton. The 1.4ha site, which has been developed on an old gas works and industrial area, required extensive engineering to remediate contamination and site level issues. Aardvark provided strategic advice in contamination assessment and waste characterisation to the development team, and developed re-use and off-site strategies to provide a sustainable and cost effective solution.
- For the latest Aardvark news please visit www.aardvarkem.co.uk.

And finally

- Forests paying the price for biofuels** The drive for "green energy" in the developed world is having the perverse effect of encouraging the destruction of tropical rainforests. Virgin forest is being razed to grow palm oil and soybeans to fuel cars and power stations in Europe and North America. Surging prices are likely to accelerate the destruction. This is being driven in part by European Union laws requiring conventional fuel to be blended with biofuels, and by subsidies equivalent to 20 pence a litre. ([New Scientist 22/11/05](#))