



Environment Matters – 6 January 2006

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

- **China and UK sign clean coal research deal** The United Kingdom is to spend £3.5 million (US\$6.1 million) over a period of three years researching 'clean coal' technologies with China. The aim is to develop power stations that emit less of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. ([SciDev.Net, 23/12/05](#))
- **Native ladybirds 'under threat'** A foreign species of ladybird is threatening to drive three native British varieties to extinction, conservationists say. The harlequin species, which arrived two years ago from continental Europe, is larger than British varieties and threatens them by taking their food. The seven spot and the two spot, which until recently were common, are under threat along with the rarer five spot. ([BBC News 27/12/05](#))
- **Fuelling debate** Public interest in carbon trading is yet to be aroused, but it soon will be as polluters begin to pass the costs of the scheme on to consumers EDF - the owner of London Energy, Seeboard and SWEB - says carbon trading has added 14% to its costs. "In the medium term, electricity prices are going up," said Steve Drummond, the managing director of carbon trading consultants C02e. "Pollution is being priced into commodities." ([The Guardian 29/12/05](#))
- **Consumers urged to get to grips with green labels** Help is at hand for sale bargain-hunters bewildered by a plethora of green labels and logos on everything from furniture to dishwashers. Environment Minister, Elliot Morley, warned people heading for the sales that not every product advertised as 'environment-friendly' lives up to the claim. To help DEFRA has launched a guide to the trusted green labels and logos on the products in our shops. ([DEFRA 26/12/05](#))
- **EU may prosecute over recycling failure** Britain could be taken to Europe's highest court as early as next month over delays to plans to recycle millions of electronic goods from mobile phones to mowers. The dispute, which could come to a head in January, has echoes of the chaos seen three years ago when a "fridge mountain" built up because Whitehall failed to make preparations for a change in recycling legislation. It coincides with this week's launch of a long-term EU waste strategy designed to make Europe "a recycling society". ([Building for a Future 02/01/06](#))
- **Tree-planting projects may not be so green** Carbon offsetting allows people to pay someone else to atone for their climate sins. Tree planting has always been a controversial method of soaking up CO2 because it is little more than a short-term fix. Researchers have found that planting trees to soak up carbon can have detrimental knock on effects. Plantations had a drastic effect on stream flow and nutrients in the soil were also affected. Planting trees is not a bad thing per se, but schemes that are not well thought through can be environmentally harmful. ([The Guardian 23/12/05](#))

Latest News from the Aardvark Team

- The Aardvark team have recently been instructed by a major Swiss food manufacturer to support them in their post PPC (Pollution Prevention & Control) environmental compliance reporting.
- For all the latest Aardvark news please visit www.aardvarkem.co.uk.

And Finally

- **Frigate bird's non-stop 26-day flight sets record** A Christmas Island frigate bird known as Lydia recently completed a 26-day non-stop journey over 2,500 miles in search of food for her chick. The trip, tracked with a device by officials at Christmas Island National Park, is by far the longest known non-stop journey by this critically endangered sea bird. The longest ever flight recorded stands at 46 days, held by a grey-headed albatross. ([Associated Press in Bangkok 23/12/2005](#))