



Environment Matters – 17 February 2006

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

- **Polluting households face green taxes** Households that recycle waste and save energy and water would be taxed less under a major fiscal shakeup put forward by an environmental think-tank. The proposals, published in a report commissioned by the Green Alliance, were aimed at discouraging people from leading environmentally damaging lifestyles. They included inefficiency charges on polluting or wasteful products such as disposable batteries, single-use cameras, garden sprinklers and traditional incandescent light bulbs. ([The Guardian 8/02/06](#))
- **Review launched to tackle waste** The government has launched its review into how it plans to tackle the growing problem of waste in England. Among the proposals is a plan to burn more of the nation's rubbish in an attempt to reduce the amount of refuse ending up in landfill sites. Environmentalists and local campaign groups are against more incineration plants, saying they will set back efforts to increase recycling rates. The government is expected to publish its updated strategy later in the year ([BBC News 14/02/06](#))
- **Winter Olympics 'satisfactory' on environment** WWF has revealed its first environmental assessment on the Turin Winter Olympics, which marks the event as 'satisfactory' for green efforts. Despite the overall positive verdict, the conservation group notes that various ski jumps and tracks affect European protected sites, energy use should be lower throughout the event and the use of artificial snow increases the potential of damaging the ground while using large amounts of water. ([Green Consumer Guide 14/02/06](#))
- **Europe seeks to boost biofuel drive** The European Commission called for new action to develop biofuels, warning that soaring oil prices and a recent Russian gas spat highlight the risks of relying on traditional power sources. It urged EU governments to take measures to expand large-scale consumer use of alternative energy sources by developing "second generation" fuels more efficient and cheaper than those currently available. The EU drive comes days after US President warned in his State of the Union address that "America is addicted to oil," also focusing on biofuels as crucial for the future. ([WBCSD 8/02/06](#))

Latest News from the Aardvark Team

- The Aardvark ecology team are gearing themselves up for the opening of the new ecology survey season, which re-opens next month. Already considerably experienced, further training in flora and fauna identification including protected species surveys has been undertaken. Aardvark is now recognised as a registered ecology consultant by BRE (the Building Research Establishment), which means clients seeking BREEAM, or EcoHomes ratings can now meet the Land Use & Ecology credit compliance requirements by commissioning Aardvark to undertake a survey.
- Please visit our website for further information and a seasonal ecology survey chart and for all the latest Aardvark news www.aardvarkem.co.uk.

And Finally

- **Oxford seeks PC users to help map climate change** Scientists set out to harness the power of home computers to predict climate change more accurately than ever before. Using the reach of the BBC and the forecasting techniques of Britain's Meteorological Office, they hope to persuade thousands of people to take part. "If 10,000 people join in, you are already bigger than the world's biggest supercomputer," said lead scientist Myles Allen from Oxford University. "The more we get, the more accurate will be our predictions. We have got 500,000 climate variations stacked up and ready to go," he told reporters. ([Reuters 14/02/06](#))
- It can be downloaded at www.bbc.co.uk/climatechange.