



Environment Matters – 19 May 2006

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

- **David Miliband calls for contract for climate change** Mr Miliband said: "An environmental contract would have new and clear rights and responsibilities for Government, for business and for individuals. The challenge we face is to marry economic growth, social justice, and environmental sustainability. They can and must go hand in hand. There will be difficult decisions along the way but also huge synergies. A low carbon economy can be good for business, good for the environment, and good for all citizens". ([DEFRA 12/05/06](#))
- **Toxic fine for Environment Agency** The Environment Agency has been fined £7,500 for polluting a salmon river in the first prosecution case against it. The Agency and contractor, May Gurney pleaded guilty to polluting the River Barle with toxic cement in 2005 while fixing a river monitoring station. A judge ordered the Agency pay £1,466 in costs and fined the contractor £27,500 and costs of £1,466 at Exeter Crown Court on Wednesday. May Gurney, from Norwich, had been contracted to put a flow monitoring station on the River Exe's main tributary, the Barle, in Somerset. ([BBC News 17/05/06](#))
- **New figures reveal scale of industry's impact on climate** The five biggest polluters in the UK produce more CO2 than all motorists combined. A league table compiled by the Guardian identifies EON UK, the electricity generator that owns Powergen, as Britain's biggest corporate emitter of greenhouse gases. It produced 26.4m tonnes of carbon dioxide last year - slightly more than Croatia did. The top five companies (EON UK, RWE Npower, Drax, Corus, and EDF) produced between them more than 100m tonnes of carbon dioxide in 2005. On average, the country's 26m private cars produce 91m tonnes each year. ([The Guardian 16/05/06](#))
- **Schools to be beacons of sustainability** Government has unveiled plans which will try to make schools models of sustainability that could inspire their local communities. Based on the idea that schools are seen by adults as one of the best sources of environmental education - second only to council information leaflets - Education Secretary Alan Johnson has launched a 'framework of action' which aims to encourage the local school to become the hub of eco-friendly activity. ([EDIE 15/05/06](#))
- **Turning the Nation's Rubbish into Profit** New proposals that will help business turn their rubbish into hard cash were unveiled by the Environment Agency and WRAP (the Waste & Resources Action Programme). The proposals, known as Waste Protocols, will play a major role in reducing many common types of commercial rubbish that has traditionally ended up in landfill. They will also allow, for the first time, many businesses and industry to turn their rubbish into valuable resources and products - potentially netting the UK economy a saving of up to £2bn whilst also reducing the cost to the environment. ([Environment Agency 10/05/06](#))

Latest News from the Aardvark Team

- One of Aardvark's mobile reedbed systems was deployed this week at London Heathrow Airport to treat the leachate arising from the green waste composting operation (also project managed by Aardvark) on behalf of BAA plc. As previously reported in Environment Matters, the mobile reedbed system is also currently being used as part of a water quality trial at four sites within Exmoor National Park.
- For all the latest Aardvark news go to www.aardvarkem.co.uk.

And Finally

- **Renewable Energy From The Gym** Fitness fanatics could soon be creating an environmentally friendly energy supply - from their gym workout. Scientists at Stirling University say they have devised a grid that can harness electricity from exercise bikes, rowing machines, treadmills and cross-trainers and use it to power the gyms themselves or even light up hotel bedrooms and kitchens. ([The Green Building Press 16/05/06](#))