



Environment Matters – 8 September 2006

Welcome to Aardvark's fortnightly environmental news briefing

- **Greatest threat yet to England's 'jewels in the crown'** England's nationally protected landscapes are under the greatest threat from development in their history, a report claimed yesterday. National parks and areas of outstanding natural beauty (AONB), both set up by previous Labour governments, are the victims of an assault on the rules under the eye of the present one, says the report by the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE). ([The Telegraph 30/08/06](#))
- **Melting ice dilutes northern seas** Shrinking ice sheets and melting glaciers are partly responsible for the freshening effect, a review in the journal 'Science' has confirmed. If salinity levels continue to drop, dramatic changes to the North Atlantic currents could occur. But more work is needed to be sure that rising global temperatures are to blame, say the authors. "For the last 50 years, oceanographers have been cruising seas at northern latitudes taking vertical profiles of salinity, and they have observed gradual declines". ([BBC News 30/08/06](#))
- **Bugged bins to promote recycling** Microchips in bins, which help councils charge for the weight of rubbish collected, could be common across the UK within two years. Three local councils are about to trial the hi-tech bins. The Local Government Association (LGA) said weighing schemes would be commonplace if the pilots were a success and endorsed by government. A think tank has urged a "pay as you throw" system as the only way to improve the UK's recycling record. ([BBC News 27/08/06](#))
- **10 years to avoid dangerous climate change** The world only has 10 years to develop and implement new technologies to generate clean electricity before climate change reaches the point of no return - something the UK government failed to appreciate in its recent energy review. Speaking at the British Association festival of science, Peter Smith, a professor of sustainable energy at the University of Nottingham, said "The rate at which we are emitting now, around 2ppm a year and rising, we could expect that that tipping point will reach us in 20 years time. That gives us 10 years to develop technologies that could start to bite into the problem." The current level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is 380ppm. ([IEMA 06/09/06](#))
- **Carbon credits critiqued** Carbon trading is unsustainable and requires the developing world to stay poor while turning the atmosphere into a commodity, and provides a useful tool for those seeking to profit from climate change. This was the position taken by Oxford academic Adam Bumpus in his paper "The political ecology of carbon offsets". ([EDIE 01/09/06](#))

Latest News from the Aardvark Team

- Mark Clayton, Aardvark's Managing Director, has just returned from Cambodia where he was co-ordinating the first phase of the EU funded waste and water treatment project near Angkor Wat, the world heritage site in Siem Reap Province. A reedbed, designed by Aardvark, has been constructed as part of the pilot project and Aardvark will be back out to Cambodia later in the year to assess it's initial performance.
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And finally

- **Innovative eco-restaurant to open** One of Europe's first eco-restaurants is set to open in Bristol. Bordeaux Quay, which cost nearly £3m, aims to achieve zero waste, reduce the amount of energy and fuels consumed and promote sustainable food systems. The restaurant hopes to reduce water consumption by using collected rainwater to flush the toilets and will re-use cooking oil as bio oil. The "eco-gastro" is the brainchild of proprietor Barney Houghton, who thinks all restaurants will have to change. ([BBC News 01/09/06](#))