

Environment Matters – 24 March 2005

Welcome to the latest edition of Aardvarks fortnightly news briefing.

- **Energy efficiency is top priority for meeting emissions reduction targets** Energy efficiency should be the main short term objective to meeting emissions reduction targets, a conference of delegates at the Energy and Environment Ministerial Roundtable in London heard this week. ([EDIE 18/03/05](#))
- **UK announces next steps on EU Emissions Trading Scheme** In order to enable UK business covered by the EU ETS to start participating fully, the Government intend to issue allowances as soon as possible. This will be on the basis of the provisional total of 736 million allowances which the European Commission has already approved. The Government will also be launching legal proceedings against the Commission. These will seek to require the Commission to consider the substance of the proposed amendment notified to them in November last year, to increase the total number of allowances to 756 million. ([DEFRA 11/03/05](#))
- **Funds available to clean up contaminated land** Environment Minister Elliot Morley has urged local authorities in England to bid for DEFRA funding to help find and clean up contaminated land. Over £17 million is available this year to help councils identify contaminated sites and, where necessary, reduce risks to human health and the environment through capital projects. ([DEFRA 22/03/05](#))
- **Asian Earthquake shockwaves cause water levels in Wiltshire to rise** Shock waves from the Asian earthquake that led to the devastating tsunami affected a Wiltshire borehole 6,500 miles away, the Environment Agency revealed today. ([Environment Agency 21/03/05](#))

To Watch Out For

- **South West to celebrate historic right of access** A historic new right for walkers to enjoy thousands of acres of open land in the south west of England will be celebrated on 28 August, rural affairs minister Alun Michael announced today. The region, which has some of the most breathtaking scenery officially mapped as open access land under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, is the sixth to have mountain, moor, heath, down and registered common land officially mapped as open access land under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. ([DEFRA 23/03/05](#))
- **Pressure builds on ammonia emissions from agriculture** Considerable uncertainty still surrounds the UK's ability to meet an EU limit on emissions of ammonia in 2010, the Environment Department (DEFRA) has admitted. Pressure is building for tighter limits in future – and the European Commission is toying with bringing cattle farming under integrated pollution prevention and control (IPPC). ([ENDS Report March 2005](#))
- **Consulting on the renewables obligation** The energy Minister, Mike O'Brien, has published the Government's preliminary consultation document outlining a limited number of options to improve the effectiveness of the Renewables Obligation (RO). The RO ensures all electricity suppliers produce a specified and increasing amount of their energy from renewable sources. ([DTI 22/03/05](#))

And finally

- **Pictures show climate change as ministers meet** A photo of Mount Kilimanjaro stripped of its snow – cap for the first time in 11,000 years will be used as dramatic testimony for action against global warming as ministers from the world's biggest polluters meet today. ([Reuters 15/03/05](#))