



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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Request for Information - Office Solutions for Defra Group

Introduction to Defra Group

Defra Group are responsible for improving and protecting the environment. We aim to grow a green economy and sustain thriving rural communities. We also support our world-leading food, farming and fishing industries. Defra is a ministerial department, supported by [33 agencies and public bodies](#). This is including but not limited to:

- Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)
- Rural Payment Agency (RPA)
- The Environment Agency (EA)
- Natural England (NE)
- Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew

Our broad remit means we play a major role in people's day-to-day lives, from the food we eat, the air we breathe, to the water we drink.

We are here to make our air purer, our water cleaner, our land greener and our food more sustainable.

Our mission is to restore and enhance the environment for the next generation, leaving it in a better state than we found it.

Priority outcomes

1. improve the environment through cleaner air and water, minimised waste, and thriving plant and terrestrial and marine wildlife
2. reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase carbon storage in the agricultural, waste, peat and tree planting sectors to help deliver net zero
3. reduce the likelihood and impact of flooding and coastal erosion on people, businesses, communities and the environment
4. increase the sustainability, productivity and resilience of the agriculture, fishing, food and drink sectors, enhance biosecurity at the border and raise animal welfare standards

The requirement

Defra Group has a current Office Solutions contract in place which may require re-procuring. We are looking to establish what the market has to offer for example:

- What innovative & sustainable office goods are available & their costs in comparison to standard core catalogue items & how they can support us with our [Greening Government Commitment targets](#) and Sustainability Strategy.

This market research aims to provide Defra Group with an overview of the current market position and how our office solutions can help to achieve Defra's priority outcomes.

Defra group is committed to making the shift from a linear to a circular economy approach, minimising our demand for primary resources and maximising the reuse of the resources already in the network. We also have a target under the Greening Government Commitments to fully remove consumer single use plastics from our office estate. You can view a definition of consumer single use plastics and examples in Appendix 1. We know our supply chain is crucial in meeting this objective. We would be grateful for information on the following key points, bearing in mind our circular economy objective and target on single use plastic removal.

RFI Questions

1. What actions does your organisation take to reduce emissions, particularly in the production of products and end to end supply chain?

2. Below are a broad set of categories we would expect to see in an office solutions catalogue. Please can you identify what percentage of each category in your catalogue is made up of sustainable products and what criteria you use to establish their sustainability?

Category	Percentage of products which are sustainable (%)	What criteria is used to establish sustainability?
PPE/Hygiene Protection Products e.g., safety clothing, hard hats, first aid kits and eye protectors.		
Janitorial Items e.g., washroom supplies, blue roll, washing-up liquid and refuse sacks.		
Books, pads, diaries and sticky notes		
Pens & highlighters		
Files & binders		
Poly Pockets		
Pencils		
Small office machines e.g. desktop printers, paper shredding machines, label makers and laminators.		
Catering consumables		
Paper e.g. cut paper & cardboard.		
Envelopes		
Electronic office supplies e.g., ink & toner printer cartridges, electronic storage media and peripherals.		
Labels		

3. How do you minimise your use of packaging materials and encourage reuse and recycling of the material at the end of its life? E.g., return & recycle schemes.

4. What measures do you have in place to ensure that customers are not financially disadvantaged by procuring sustainable products?

5. How do your products and services support reuse, please provide examples?

6. What is the criteria that must be fulfilled for a product to be defined as sustainable in your catalogue

7. What barriers to sustainability do you feel there are in this category? Easiest and/or most challenging sub-categories.

8. If possible, please provide any additional information regarding the market you feel would be relevant to our sustainability targets.

If you are interested in submitting a response, please can you register your interest via email to dgcofficesolutions@defra.gov.uk.

All correspondence must be made via the messaging function. The deadline for submitting a response is 31/10/2023 at 12:00.

Please note this is purely a request for information exercise to establish the market environment and is not a notice of intent to tender. Should we decide to go out to tender in the future a formal notice will be published in line with the Public Contracting Regulations 2015.

Annex 1

What is Consumer Single Use Plastic (CSUP)

CSUP is defined in the Greening Government Commitments as plastic not designed to accomplish multiple trips or rotations by being returned to a producer for refill or re-use. It includes:

- items made wholly or partly of plastic,
- recyclable plastic items,
- plastic items labelled as bio-based,
- biodegradable or compostable plastics. Biodegradable and compostable plastics are inherently single use, designed to be used once before disposal.

A non-exhaustive list of CSUP examples are provided below.

- coffee cups with plastic lining
- water cups
- straws and stirrers
- cutlery
- condiment sachets and milk jiggers
- plates and takeaway food containers
- tea bags containing plastic
- enveloped tea bags and hot drink or sugar sachets
- individually wrapped biscuits
- plastic film in sandwich containers
- shrink-wrap used in catering

- toast or sandwich wrappers
- catering milk replaced with glass bottles or pergals
- drinks bottles
- water bottles
- Tetra Pak cartons
- bags
- disposable cleaning bottles
- plastic cleaning brushes
- disposable cleaning wipes
- furniture packaging
- dispatch packaging
- stationery items wrapped in plastic
- plastic pens, highlighters, markers, rulers or pockets
- plastic covers for in-house printed booklets