

Executive Summary of South East ERDF Operational Programme

This South East England Operational Programme (SEEOP) sets out how ERDF resources are to be used in the Region over the period 2007-2013. The Programme Document has been drawn up in accordance with EU and UK Government guidelines.

The Operational Programme combines €23.706m of support from the European Regional Development Fund with €23.406m match funding. The overall value of the programme is thus €47.412m over its 7-year life.

The Programme is based upon an analysis of the needs and opportunities facing South East England, particularly the recognised importance of decoupling further economic growth from resource consumption, pollution generation and a loss of biodiversity if the Region is to achieve its vision of achieving sustainable prosperity by 2016¹.

The aim of this Operational Programme is to: **"Promote competitiveness in South East England whilst contributing to reducing the region's ecological footprint."**

To achieve this aim the Programme has established three objectives:

- To raise levels of knowledge and innovation across all business sectors in order to support more resource efficient business practices, boosting profitability and long-term competitiveness;
- To stimulate innovation and job creation in new and emerging ecologically-driven market sectors
- To reduce the rate of growth of the Region's ecological footprint, whilst stimulating economic growth

These objectives will be delivered through two Priority Axes:

- Promoting Sustainable Production and Consumption
- Technical Assistance

The Strategy for the Programme has been drawn up, in consultation with regional partners, as the most effective means of investing the resources available in order to meet the challenges facing the region over the coming 7 years.

The focus of the Programme is on ensuring sustainable production and consumption, through promoting innovation and knowledge transfer and stimulating enterprise and supporting successful businesses. It is intended that this will not only deliver positive sustainable development outcomes, so improving the attractiveness of the region, and secure a more competitive economy but will also lead to the creation of more and, more particularly, better jobs in the regional economy as a whole.

As resources are limited the Regional partners have decided that it is necessary to concentrate resources through a focused approach. The Programme is pan-regional in its approach but due regard in implementation will be had to matters of social inclusion and territorial cohesion. It is essential that the weaker parts of the Region gain strong benefit from this Competitiveness Programme, whilst traditionally excluded groups are also supported to secure equality of opportunity.

¹ As set out in the "Regional Economic Strategy for South East England 2006-16"

The Programme will be organised in a way that is conducive to the Government's objective of simplifying business support and recognises the aim of the Business Support Simplification Programme (BSSP). Equally, the Programme also intends to complement related initiatives, such as the Technology Strategy Board.

The expected outputs, results and impacts of the Programme are set out below. These are regarded as the minimum to be achieved.

Output	Target
Number of businesses assisted to improve their performance	750
Number of additional firms involved in business networks	800
Number of businesses within the region engaged in new collaboration with UK knowledge base	270
Number of businesses in the region developing R&D links with other businesses	70
Number of businesses engaged in developing sustainable mobility strategies	240

Result	Target
Number of businesses improving performance	1250
Gross new jobs created	180
Number of businesses making financial savings from improved energy and resource efficiency	550
Number of SMEs reducing energy, waste or water usage by 10%	To be developed in light of ongoing evaluation
Number of businesses achieving independent environmental accreditation	To be developed in light of ongoing evaluation
Number of businesses increasing percentage of turnover attributable to new and improved products by 5%	110
Reduction in road congestion and pollution levels attributable to sustainable mobility strategies	10% reduction on existing levels
Number of businesses tendering for public sector contracts	75
Development and dissemination of good practice expertise	Qualitative assessment

Impact	Target
Net additional employment	110
Net increase in GVA	€32,000,000
To contribute to Regional target of stabilising region's ecological footprint, from current annual growth rate of 1.1% per capita	To be developed in light of ongoing evaluation
Reduction in region's CO ₂ emissions	85,000 tonnes
Broad uptake of innovative actions piloted in region*	Qualitative assessment