

Seizing international opportunities



The total value of the low carbon and environmental goods and services sector in the UK is estimated to be £106.5 billion, however, with the value of the global sector around £3 trillion, there is a massive opportunity for exporting overseas.

With the involvement of Envirotrade-Environmental Technologies Reaching Overseas Markets, a new initiative from

East of England International (EEI), businesses in the region are getting a helping hand to enhance their international trade strategies.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in particular experience difficulties overcoming barriers to international expansion, and for many businesses preparing to export can often be a daunting prospect. However, Environtrade looks to support SMEs and larger organisations engaged in environmental technology to obtain a significant market share in a new or expanding overseas market.

Commenting about the project, Sanjay Purohit of EEI said: “The East of England is a major contributor to the UK’s exports with 2% of the region’s businesses generating over 10% of the annual export trade. Although the region has a significant cluster of environmental goods and services, it is lagging behind the performance of London and other leading global regions in securing international market share.

“The project will cost £750,000 and will be delivered in partnership with existing business support structures over the next three years. Without the £300,000 contribution it has received from the ERDF the opportunity for businesses to focus on these international markets would be lost.”


Envirotrade is specifically designed to help companies engaged in the provision of low carbon products and services, such as sustainable construction, bio-fuels, energy efficiency and clean-energy generation, develop their international strategy.

A team of international trade specialists will draw on other sector and mentoring expertise to help businesses identify and assess the strength of the business and overcomes any weaknesses.

As well as the provision of individual support, businesses are invited to workshops which offer the opportunity to network with other organisations in similar situations, and the chance to learn from international speakers. The initiative also encourages overseas trade visits, to learn best practice, and attendance at international exhibitions to promote services and forge new partnerships.

Sanjay remarked: "With the opportunities available to companies in the East of England, it has been important to take advantage of ERDF funding to expand and target our services in this area. Although in the early stages of the project, it is already attracting good levels of interest and we expect to be able to make a important contribution to the regional economy."

That investment is expected to engage and assist a total of 188 businesses during its lifetime, of which it is anticipated that 15 will go on to integrate a new product, process or service as a result of the intervention. As a result, 36 new exporters and around 50 new jobs will be created within the East of England.

Priority Axis 2			
Funding:	Total Project Cost: £750,000 ERDF: £300,000		
Solution for Business Product:	Accessing International Markets		
Scope:	East of England	Project Duration:	January 2009–April 2012
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ERDF Details:	<p>The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is a seven-year investment programme part financed by the European Union. Its objective is 'towards low carbon economic growth' in the East of England and €110.9 million has been allocated to our region.</p> <p>The fund aims to help small and medium size enterprises respond to the challenges of climate change and the huge commercial potential behind a low carbon economy.</p> <p>For more information visit w: http://www.communities.gov.uk/regeneration/regenerationfunding/europeanregionaldevelopment/eastengland/ or tel+44 0303 4446400</p> 