

Better Management in Green Purchasing

The LEAP Project

• I • C • L • E • I

Local Governments for
Sustainability

Greener Public Purchasing has already contributed a great deal towards European environmental improvement – but a huge potential still remains to be exploited.

Recent research has shown that European public authorities buy huge amounts of goods, for example 125 billion kg of milk products and 2,8 million computers year by year. If food in public canteens, hospitals, schools, etc. was purely from organic agriculture, this would prevent environmental damage equivalent to the average emissions of more than two million EU citizens.

But despite the fact that green purchasing has been practised by some pioneers throughout Europe for more than 10 years, change does not come easily. The example of food shows that action needs to be co-ordinated between a multitude of people: Chefs, guests, procurers, suppliers, etc.

In general, not enough is done, but also in many cases a great deal of effort is invested in making only minor improvements. Therefore more systematic and efficient action is needed. Furthermore, although prices for green products may be high for authorities buying on their own, combining the purchasing actions of several authorities could change this.

In the light of these facts a group of 12 municipalities throughout Europe have started the LEAP project.

Aims of the LEAP project

- Examining how the management and implementation of green purchasing can be improved through *integration with environmental management systems*
- Developing practical approaches aimed at realising the environmental and financial benefits of *joint procurement*.



LEAP – Local Authority
EMAS and Procurement –
is a project of Leicester City
Council with support from the
European Commission's
LIFE Environment
Programme



*Alison Lea
Project Coordinator,
Leicester City Council*

“Leicester has had the lead in many European initiatives – I am happy that we have the chance to co-ordinate this important project as well.”



*Helmut Lusser
Senior Researcher, Global to Local*
“If public authorities focused their effort on some priority products, much more could be achieved for Europe's environment.”

Why link green procurement with EMAS, ISO 14000 and co?

In most European public authorities procurement is a relatively decentralised process involving many individuals in different departments. Even where central purchasing units exist, some procurement responsibility will still rest with staff in other units. In such situations ensuring the implementation of green procurement requires effective communication between and within departments, and also the setting of clear priorities.

In an increasing number of authorities environmental management systems are being put in place to provide a useful framework for

co-ordinating environmental improvements. As public procurement is an activity with substantial consequences in terms of environmental impact, it clearly makes sense to promote the integration of green procurement actions into such management systems.

The LEAP project will develop a set of concrete tools to enable this integration, taking into account the various management systems in operation today (EMAS, ISO 14000, *ecoBUDGET*, Göteborg Environmental Diploma), such as EMS management procedures for organising procurement in the most environmentally responsible way.

How joint procurement could cut green prices

It is simple economics that the higher the demand for a product the lower the price will be. Any new product being introduced to the market needs to quickly increase demand in order to achieve a return on developmental costs and realise economies of scale. The combined purchasing power of several public authorities working together can effectively provide this demand, and give new, “greener” products the helping hand they need on the market.

The impact of public authorities acting in unison to drive the market is perfectly illustrated by the impressive success achieved in the US, where a Federal obligation for all computers purchased by federal departments to be Energy Star compliant, led to a situation now in which virtually all PCs sold on the market are compliant without price increases. In

another example, the eight European cities involved in the ZEUS project used their combined purchasing power to put into operation more than 1000 zero and low emission vehicles and a wide range of alternative fuels, and thereby enjoy substantial economies of scale.

Furthermore, despite the internal market, the price of many products still varies considerably between different European countries, as does product availability. Joining procurement actions across national borders can both ensure that the lowest price is available to all, and that a wider range of products is offered.

The LEAP project will develop contract arrangements and on this basis invite European public authorities wishing to access the benefits of joint procurement.


Steps in the LEAP Project

The three-year LEAP project, which started in November 2003, consists of 9 steps. First the partners will survey current practice in integrating EMS with procurement. In parallel they will assess the current procurement processes in the partner cities for selected products. From there, a set of tools – including a model joint procurement scheme – will be developed. The year 2005 will

see an extensive testing phase, both of the EMS procurement tools and joint procurement. Here, other public authorities will have the opportunity to participate. Building on this experience a second round of joint procurement calls will be launched and all tools developed will be reviewed by late 2006. Results will be presented at a final conference.



Peter Nohrstedt
Procurement Expert, Swedish Environmental Management Council
“We want to bring Swedish experience to other European countries – and Swedish authorities should profit from falling prices for green products in Europe.”

Survey of present green proc. program	11/03 – 05/04
Review of EMAS use	11/03 – 05/04
Development EMS/ Procurement Tools	05/04 – 11/04
Joint proc. network and contract modul	05/04 – 11/04
1st Joint Procurement	11/04 – 09/05
Testing Tools	11/04 – 11/05
2nd Joint Procurement	09/05 – 05/06
Revise Tools	11/05 – 10/06
Final Conference	

LEAP project timetable

Procura+, ICLEI's Sustainable Procurement Campaign

Procura+, ICLEI's Sustainable Procurement Campaign, is aimed at promoting the mainstream implementation of sustainable public procurement throughout Europe, and was launched in September 2003. The experiences gained during the LEAP project will be used to update and further expand the Campaign approach. Furthermore, Campaign participants will have the opportunity to join in the purchasing activities and directly profit from falling prices.

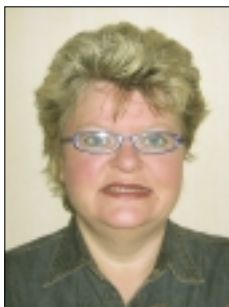


More information

More information on the project, the project partners and the proceeding of the work can be found on the project's web site:
<http://www.iclei-europe.org/index.php?id=LEAP>



Francisco Neves
Environmental Expert, City of Almada
“In countries like Portugal there is a growing belief that public purchasing has to become greener– we want to do it in the most efficient way from the start.”



Eren Andersson

Procurement Professional, Göteborg
“In Göteborg every administrative unit has to have an environmental management system – but the link to procurement still needs improvement.”

The project partners



The LEAP project partners bring a wealth of experience to the project, from right across Europe. Leicester City Council has had an EMAS system and green purchasing policies in place for more than five years. The other 11 local authority partners have different degrees of experience, reflecting the situation in United Kingdom (London Boroughs of Lewisham, Southwark and Sutton, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council and Guildford Borough Council), Greece (Muni-

icipalities of Holargos, Amaroussion and Kalithea-Rhodes), Sweden (City of Göteborg), Spain (Barcelona Provincial Council) and Portugal (City of Almada).

Global to Local and the administrations of Amaroussion, Greece, and the London Borough of Southwark, UK, were all partners in the ZEUS project and contribute their experience in joint procurement. IDEa and the Swedish Environmental Management Council have carried out a variety of activities related to green procurement and environmental management systems. ICLEI has co-ordinated a great number of European projects, and recently completed the RELIEF project. All the local authorities will contribute their wide range of experiences in green procurement and environmental management.

Registration Form

Mrs Mr

Title

First name

Last name

Organisation

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City

Country

E-mail.....

I would like to receive:

- More detailed information about the LEAP project
- Regular information about the LEAP project and other ICLEI activities
- More information about the Procura+ Sustainable Procurement Campaign

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