

# Resources and Waste Targets Expert Group (RWTEG)

## Meeting minutes – 22 January 2021

### Attendees

Expert panellists: Paul Ekins (Chair), John Barrett, Margaret Bates, Raimund Bleischwitz, Peter Hopkinson, Lucy O'Shea, Phil Purnell, Jacopo Torriti.

Other attendees: 6 Defra group officials, and representatives from WRAP.

### 1. Resource Productivity Target: Proposed Baseline Approach and Expert Involvement

- 1.1 The University of Leeds shared a presentation on the proposal for the resource productivity's baselining approach. The University of Leeds has carried out similar baselining work for carbon emissions, which is closely linked to resource use.
- 1.2 Future baseline scenarios for resource use are needed to assess the impacts of possible policies and the suitability of targets.
- 1.3 There are a number of challenges involved in predicting material use, including a highly variable historic time series.
- 1.4 The University of Leeds propose holding a series of workshops with RWTEG members and additional industry experts in order to construct a number of baseline scenarios for resource use. These scenarios will be published in due course.

### 2. Reducing Residual Waste: Target Update

- 2.1 Defra are working on the finer details of the target scope, but following feedback from RWTEG and stakeholders, are moving forwards to explore the feasibility of an 'all waste sent to landfill or put through incineration' target scope, including incineration with energy recovery and waste sent overseas for energy recovery.
- 2.2 Defra will be proposing to set a level of ambition in line with the Resource and Waste Strategy's target to reach zero avoidable waste by 2050 to determine an ambitious, achievable target for reducing residual waste.
- 2.3 Defra have commissioned a project to forecast future waste arisings, due to be completed this financial year (2020/21), and which will form the basis of the baseline

for the residual waste target. This will include RWTEG involved early in the next financial year (2021/22). This project will be published in due course.

### **3. Baseline Scenarios**

- 3.1 Baseline scenarios are being developed as part of the Common Evidence Framework put in place to oversee and standardise the progress and work of the different policy areas that are required to introduce a target under the Environment Bill. This helps to ensure consistency and provides a systematic framework under which target impacts can be considered on other areas of policy.
- 3.2 The scenarios take the extreme cases of two critical uncertainties that were chosen as the most influential uncertainties across all target areas (air quality, water, biodiversity, woodland cover, and resources and waste). These critical uncertainties were the government's environmental enforcement capability, and environmental values, attitudes and behaviours in the future.
- 3.3 RWTEG agreed that they would welcome a workshop on these four scenarios. There was some concern regarding how these scenarios would be integrated into the resource productivity baseline scenarios, which Defra will consider.

### **4. AOB**

- 4.1 RWTEG expressed a strong interest in reviewing the final reports of the resource productivity baselining work and the future waste arisings forecasting project upon completion.

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