



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Environment fact sheet

[World Environment Day
focus – Food Waste](#)

5th June 2013



Estimated total UK food and drink waste in the food chain is around 15 million tonnes per year.

UK total carbon footprint, including greenhouse gases (GHG) other than just carbon dioxide (CO₂) rose by 5 per cent between 1993 and 2010

Between 1970 and 2011, the breeding farmland birds index halved.

This factsheet has been compiled in collaboration with the devolved administrations. For further information contact:
Scottish Statistics: www.scotland.gov.uk/envstats
Wales: [environment statistics](#)
Northern Ireland: [environmental statistics 2013](#)

Figures are for UK unless specified.

Email: enviro.statistics@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Publishing Transparency Team,
Area 4D Nobel House
Horseferry Road, London
SW1P 2AL

Photo credit: William Richardson

PB: 13939

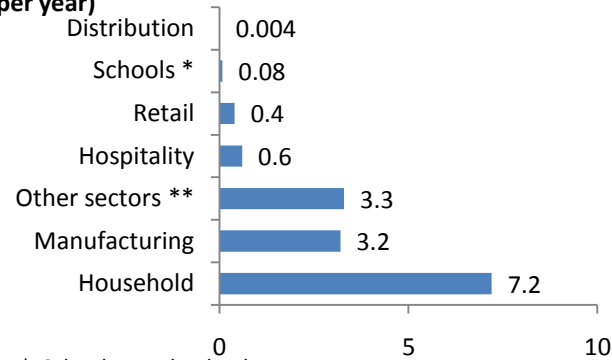
*If printed this can be folded along the dotted lines
into three to form a leaflet. Short edge setting for duplex printing*

Total food waste

Estimated total UK food and drink waste in the food chain is around 15 million tonnes per year, with households generating 7.2mt/year of which 4.4 is avoidable (down from 5.3 in 2006/07).

Overall 15% of edible food and drink purchases are wasted each year. Different foods are wasted at different rates; 17% of overall food purchases, 7.1% of soft drinks and 6.3% of alcoholic drinks are wasted.

Food waste in the food chain , UK (millions of tonnes per year)



* Schools - England only

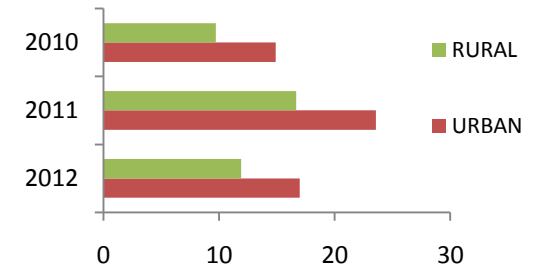
** includes other parts of the hospitality and food service sectors

Source: Estimates [for household food and drink waste in the UK](#); [The composition of waste disposed of by the UK Hospitality to Industry; Food waste in schools](#), WRAP 2011

Air Quality

The average number of pollution days in urban sites in 2012 was 17 days. This compares with 24 days in 2011 and 15 days in 2010. The average number of pollution days in rural sites in 2012 was 12 days, compared with 17 days in 2011 and 10 days in 2010.

Number of days when air pollution is moderate or higher in the UK

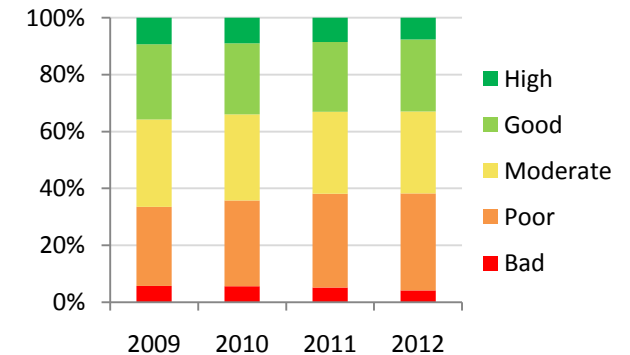


Source: AEA Energy, [Defra](#)

River water quality - England

Between 2009 and 2012 the number of assessments classed as high fell from 304 to 253 and the number of assessments classed as bad fell from 189 to 139. This suggests that there has been a mix of deteriorations and improvements in the biological quality of the water environment.

Biological status of rivers - England 2009-2012



Source: [Environment Agency](#)

Noise - England

Figures collected by the UK Office for National Statistics suggest that noise complaints to local government offices have increased fivefold over the past 20 years.

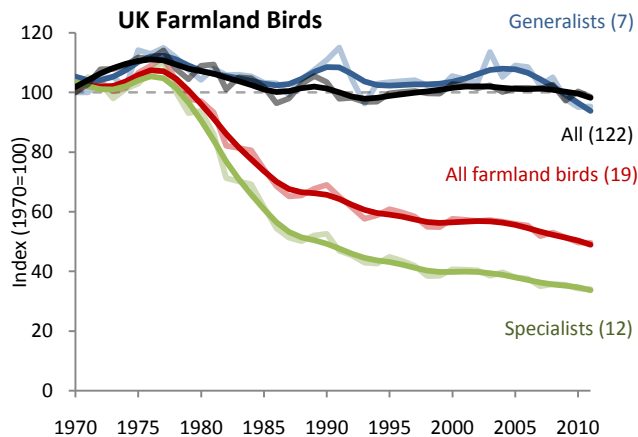
In 2010-11 there was an average of 7.8 complaints about noise per 1,000 people in England, equivalent to around 1,100 complaints per day.

City of London had the highest proportion of complaints with 67 per 1000 population. The area with the fewest complaints per 1000 population in 2010-11 was Wiltshire with 1.3.

Source: [WHO](#), [ONS](#)

Biodiversity

Between 1970 and 2011, the breeding farmland birds index has halved in UK. The decline has been largely due those species that are restricted to or highly dependent on farmland habitats (the 'specialists'). In 2011 three of the 12 farmland specialists had declined to a tenth of the 1970 levels; Grey Partridge, Turtle Dove and Corn Bunting.

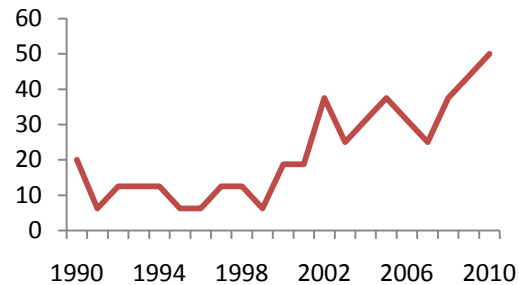


Source: [RSPB](#), [BTO](#), [JNCC](#), [Defra](#)

Marine

Despite improvement in the proportion of assessed fish stocks harvested sustainably, the majority of UK fish stocks have either been below full reproductive capacity or have been harvested unsustainably each year between 2001 and 2008.

Percentage of fish stocks harvested sustainably and at full reproductive capacity



Source: [ICES](#), [Cefas](#)

Waste and Recycling – England & Wales

Total household waste in England was over 6 million tonnes between July and September 2012, (Includes recycling, compost and reuse).

In England in the last 5 years household waste for recycling, composting or reuse has increased by 17 per cent, while residual or 'black bag' household waste has fallen by 25 per cent.

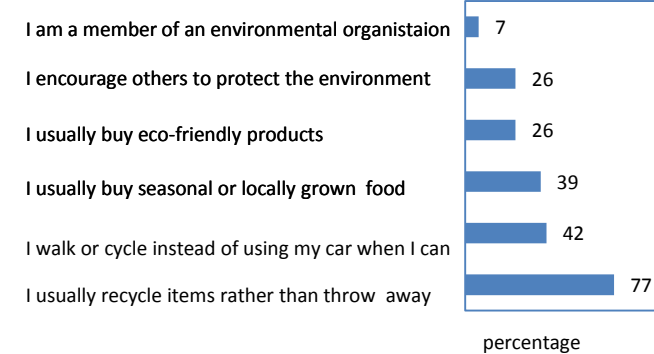
In Wales over the same period, household waste for recycling and reuse has increased 59 per cent. 'black bag' waste has fallen by 40 per cent.

Source: [wastedataflow](#), [Defra](#)

Pro environmental behaviours - England

In total, 90 per cent of the population undertook one or more of the specified pro-environmental behaviours.

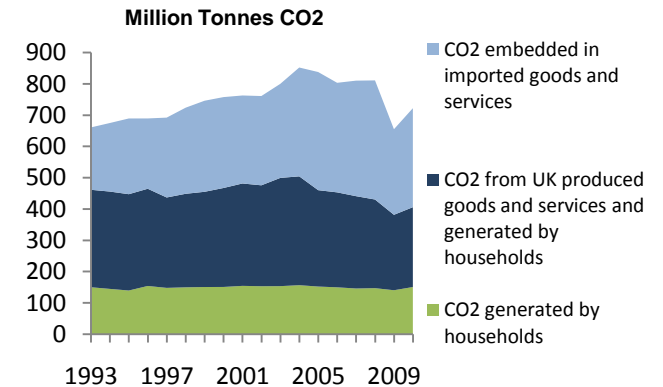
Which environment related activities do you do ? (based on 3544 respondents)



Source: [Natural England \(2012\)](#)

Carbon footprint

UK's total carbon footprint, including greenhouse gases (GHG) other than just carbon dioxide (CO₂) rose by 5 per cent between 1993 and 2010, with a peak in 2004.



Source: [University of Leeds](#), [Defra](#)