

Annex A

Consultation response form for the revolving green fund

1. Respondents should complete the form below.
2. Responses should be e-mailed to sustainabledevelopment@hefce.ac.uk by **21 April 2008**.
3. We will publish an analysis of responses to the consultation. Additionally, all responses may be disclosed on request, under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. The Act gives a public right of access to any information held by a public authority, in this case HEFCE. This includes information provided in response to a consultation. We have a responsibility to decide whether any responses, including information about your identity, should be made public or treated as confidential. We can refuse to disclose information only in exceptional circumstances. This means responses to this consultation are unlikely to be treated as confidential except in very particular circumstances. Further information about the Act is available at www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk.

Respondent's details

Are you responding: On behalf of an organisation
(Delete one)

Name of responding organisation/individual Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges

Contact name Martin Wiles – Executive member

Position within organisation (if applicable) Executive Member, Director and Trustee

Contact telephone number 0117 928 8034

Contact e-mail address m.r.wiles@bristol.ac.uk

Consultation questions

(Boxes for responses can be expanded to the desired length.)

Consultation question 1: Do you agree with the proposed aims of the revolving green fund set out in paragraph 25? Do you agree that this scheme will meet the aims of the revolving green fund?

Yes to both questions.
Perhaps it should not be called a green fund as it is focused on carbon and run through Salix. Opportunities for transport, waste and other environmental projects should be considered, that may not have such a positive carbon return.

Consultation question 2: We invite views on the likely uptake for this fund. Would you currently consider applying to the institutional small projects or transformational funds? Do you have transformational projects that require funding? If so, please describe briefly. For existing Salix clients only, do you have views on how we could avoid putting you at a disadvantage?

Talking to EAUC members the feeling is that there will be good take-up. There may be a bias to well informed HE institutions that have the time to apply and get in before others do. There have also been comments that for HE institutions with established funding streams, this fund will not be attractive to them due to the 'strings' attached with setting up a revolving fund. This is a positive situation though. Finally some institutions are concerned that this fund may have the opposite effect to the last comment, i.e. it will not provide additionality in the sector to the degree that HEFCE might expect, i.e. existing streams of funding will be reduced and the revolving fund will fill the gap, allowing institutions to spend current carbon/green funds on other issues. The level with which this effect will be felt cannot be gauged and it might be a research project in the future if the fund goes ahead.

Consultation question 3: Do you agree with the proposed assessment criteria set out in paragraphs 35 and 36? Are there other criteria we should consider? Are some aspects more important than others and, if so, how should we prioritise them?

It will be difficult to get innovative projects with short paybacks funded.
It is also not clear how lifetime carbon criteria set out in paragraph 28 works, it does not seem to fit with other measures of money spent per carbon weight saved. Also the bullet points in Para 28 seem contradictory, longer paybacks are allowed for more carbon effective investments. This may need a bit more explanation.

Consultation question 4: Do you feel that institutions should be required to make a financial contribution? If so, is 25 per cent an appropriate minimum proportion? If not what percentage should this be? If you feel that institutions should not be required to make a financial contribution how could they demonstrate their commitment?

Members are split on this. Contribution does suggest commitment, but if no funding is available the fund is missing an opportunity. There might be consideration in the future for some funding to 100%, with no institution contribution.

The loan if treated in the long term (20 years) almost becomes a grant and therefore reduces paybacks for the institutions spend, as long as it is recycled.

Consultation question 5: Is the application process described in paragraphs 37-41 the most appropriate for applications to the revolving green fund? Is the information we propose to request adequate to inform our decisions? What else should we ask for, bearing in mind the need to address the hidden but real costs of applying?

There is obviously a need for sound selection criteria; but it will favour early adaptors and those with existing resource (staff). In essence this fund will provide funds for well supported institutions that have no funding for carbon reduction.

Consultation question 6: Are the monitoring and accountability arrangements described in paragraphs 45-48 proportionate and reasonable?

Yes, some concerns in the longer term on the recycling of the fund internally, Salix use a 20 year programme view and there needs to be clarity if funds have done their work before this timescale. One comment from an EAUC member was, that administrative burden should be small, to allow focus on carbon management.