



News Release

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Government To Investigate Resource Risks to Business

AEA Wins Contract to Investigate Materials and Resources That Are Under Threat

AEA has won a contract from Defra to undertake a review of the future resource risks faced by UK business. The work will include an assessment of the future viability of some materials and products and will bring together opinion from the sectors most reliant on those resources.

The future availability of certain materials and resources to UK businesses is under threat and their future market price uncertain. Such resources include timber, water, fish, minerals and precious metals. Some of these resources are necessary to build high technology products essential to both business viability and delivery of policy goals.

“An example is the rapid depletion of rare earth elements required in the production of magnets for wind turbines,” said AEA’s Phil Dolley, Resource Efficiency Director. “For climate change policies to succeed, and for large scale development of new environmental technologies in the UK, these materials need to be in plentiful supply over time. This is just one of many examples where resource risk needs to be seen in the context of policy interaction, sustainable development and economic advantage.”

Some businesses are unaware of the threats. Awareness is important so that businesses take action to conserve the resources and to find alternatives. Work recently developed for Defra identified that UK business could save over £6 bn by adopting resource efficiency measures that cost nothing, or would pay back within a year.

Defra's Sustainable Business Resource Efficiency (SBRE) team is keen to build on work conducted to date. This project will identify resources posing a substantial risk to specific sectors. The results will enable Defra to engage directly with these sectors.

TSB (The Technology Strategy Board), BIS (The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills) and WRAP (The Waste & Resource Action Programme) are also involved in the programme.

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Notes to Editors

AEA is one of the world's leaders in energy and environmental consultancy and information management. The company operates in the UK, Europe, the US and China advising the UK Government, the EU and major private sector organizations in energy and climate change, air and water quality, risk management, resources and waste, sustainable transport and knowledge transfer.

AEA manages the UK government's Envirowise project, one of the world's largest resource efficiency programmes and provides carbon management expertise to many of the UK's largest private sector organisations.

AEA is voted Number One Consultancy for Climate Change and Renewables by industry consultants (Edie surveys 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009).

For further information please visit www.aeat.co.uk

Defra is the UK government department responsible for policy and regulations on the environment, food & rural affairs.