

Working Groups



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International Business

EIC's International Business Working Group represents companies carrying out international business across most sectors of the environmental technology and services industry including consultants, training providers, technology firms and equipment manufacturers. The environmental goods and services industry is worth US\$51.5bn per year, and the environmental technology and services industry is at its heart.

Two years ago the Group carried out a survey of all members on the help available from Government on export activities, which revealed that 90 per cent of respondents believe that the current level of Government export support is inadequate. It also found a huge lack of knowledge of Government environmental export promotion schemes demonstrating a communication challenge for the UK and EU Government support agencies. Since then the Group has worked to help close this communication gap by bringing it's members and the relevant government departments closer together.

The Group also works closely with the Environmental Sector Advisory Group (ESAG), which advises UK Trade and Investment on how business and government can best work hand in hand.

The Group held a popular seminar on exporting environmental goods and services to the Accession States. We believe that this is a major market sector for UK businesses going forward. During the year the Group's members also met with key policy makers in the export field including the Environmental Industries Sector Unit (EISU), the Overseas Project Funds, DTI and Defra.

The future success of the UK's environmental technology and services industry in growing the global marketplace, depends on the ability to work with government to promote this important industry sector.

Oil & Marine Pollution Control

The Oil & Marine Pollution Control Working Group is working towards ensuring the sustainable development of the UK and international marine environment through removing the barriers to UK companies that can provide oil spill pollution prevention and control technologies and services to both the onshore and offshore environment. Its Members consist of representatives from oil spill response companies, manufacturers of oil pollution control technologies, marine environmental protection services, environmental consultancies, pollution monitoring organisations, laboratories, academic institutions, marine infrastructure companies and associated industries.

The Group's objective is to identify key regulatory barriers to growth facing the industry. We are working to overcome them by lobbying for relevant legislation, standards, regulations and economic instruments, as well as effective and consistent enforcement. Over the last year the Group has been pushing for the establishment of a statutory MOT style inspection regime for oil tanks and has prepared a paper outlining the benefits of such a scheme as a better regulation measure for reducing pollution incidents involving oil and fuels. The Group has raised the proposal in a meeting with Ian Pearson MP, Minister of State for Climate Change and will be urging the Environment Agency to include the recommendation that the Government implements a mandatory MOT scheme as part of their review of the Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) (England) Regulations 2001.

Amongst other key issues for the Group is the forthcoming Marine Bill. Members have been engaged with Defra throughout the consultation process of the Marine Bill and will continue to do so after the formal consultation process, as the Bill progresses through Parliament.

Other matters currently being pursued by the Group are: requirements to use accredited clean-up companies for oil spills; UK implementation and attitude towards the European MARPOL Directive; the issue of planning for dealing with chemical spills; the definition of waste oil and the disposal of oily waste. A number of high calibre guest speakers, representing policy makers and regulators, such as the Environment Agency and Defra have delivered a series of presentations providing the opportunity for the Group to direct probing questions to the right people and assist in shaping Government policy and its implementation. The coming year will see the Group focusing on developing these and other initiatives with a view to driving high standards of oil pollution control both on and offshore and removing the barriers to our Members providing the products and services to enable these standards to be met.