

France



Main Issues related to SCP

France has experienced significant progress especially due to the Grenelle Environment that emphasised SCP as of particular importance. Numerous initiatives have been developed recently in both production and consumption.

Energy:

Power production in France has traditionally been dominated by nuclear energy. Nevertheless renewable energies have progressed substantially and in 2006 consumption reached 10.5 % of total energy consumption. Wind power and solar energy have shown rapid development.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions:

In 2007 France produced 531 million equivalent tones of CO₂ which had decreased by 5.6% in the period leading up to it from 1990 onwards. Obligations under the Kyoto protocol have already been fulfilled.

Waste:

The annual production of radioactive waste is 1 kg per capita and the country possesses a stock of 1 million cubic meters of radioactive waste. A 2006 law on the Management of Radioactive Materials and Waste plans for a reversible storage in deep geological layers.

Policies and Strategic Framework

Most of the proposals and initiatives regarding sustainable development and SCP have been integrated in the Grenelle Environment process. The Grenelle Environment Summit was organized in 2007 under the initiative of the President of France to define the National Strategy for Sustainable Development for the next five years. It was an open debate that brought together the government, local authorities, trade unions, business and voluntary sectors to design an action plan with concrete measures to tackle environmental issues. The Grenelle Law was finally adopted in October 2008 and addresses a wide range of domains such as housing, transport, ecotaxes etc. This text, known as "First Grenelle Act", reflects the legislative commitments and establishes the general policy but does not specify the practical implementation or funding.

Within industry the French policy of major risk prevention includes a large chapter regarding industrial risk, with special attention to security in industrial processes, and the manipulation of materials and pollution. The responsibility for the correct management of such risks is divided into several public offices that effectuate research and work in cooperation with the industry, local associations and other organizations.

Legal and Regulatory Framework

In the light of the first Grenelle phase, a new text plans a series of measures with the aim of achieving the commitments considered within the law. It includes hundreds of articles aiming to generate the juridical, economical and statutory framework to achieve the established objectives. Focus includes improving energy efficiency, transport alternatives for traditional routes, energy and climate, biodiversity and protection of natural areas, risks, health and waste.

One of the first measures to be implemented in 2008 was the bonus-malus system on new vehicles with penalties for purchasers of polluting vehicles and bonus for less polluting cars. Once implemented, the system allowed for a shift in consumption towards cleaner vehicles. Other initiatives are a tax on heavy vehicles that will be levied from 2011 or the "climate energy contribution" tax pending approval.

In pollution control, the ICPE system (classified premises for the protection of the environment), originally created in 1917, identifies facilities that present risks to the environment and determines adequate procedures for their reduction. 5,849 facilities had been registered in 2008.

The Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME) has developed a fund system for the evaluation of GHG Emissions that can be allocated to companies, associations and public administration.

The Grenelle law designates targets for public procurement in a wide range of fields such as GHG emissions, transport, wood and paper consumption or catering.

Greening Industry and Society

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has experienced important growth in recent years. Initiatives like the IMS-Entrepreneur for the City and the ORSE (Observatory of CSR) have played an important role in fostering CSR through the creation of networks, research, exchange of practices, technical support and workshops. A great number of French companies are currently committed to the 10 principles of Global Compact. In fact France is one of the most represented countries within the initiative. A regulation was also adopted in 2001 (Law 2001/420) making it compulsory for companies listed in the stock exchange to provide an annual social and environmental report. The affiliation to EMAS is very low with only 12 companies registered, whilst ISO 14001 certification is experiencing significant growth (2,607 in 2005). Since its introduction in 2001, Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) has become increasingly popular in France. Pension funds have been major promoters of SRI in France with their decision to progressively designate a certain part or their full assets to socially responsible products.

Main Actors and Projects

In addition to the **Ministry of Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and the Sea** that plays a major role in all matters related to Grenelle and sustainable development, the **Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME)** is also a relevant actor. Several organisations have also been created to prevent industrial risks and guarantee security in industrial process.

