Green economy: a UK success story
Recession resilience

How does the green economy compare?

Indexed growth rate since the financial crisis

Size of UK economy 2011

“Over a third of the UK’s economic growth in 2011-12 is likely to have come from green business”
CBI, 2012

Green economy £122bn
General economy £1,315bn
Low carbon and environmental jobs compared to other sectors 2010-11

Low carbon and environmental
939,600

Financial services
1,061,900

Motor trade manufacture and retail
518,400

Telecoms
212,900
Our calculation of what England’s share of the UK’s CO₂ reduction target should be, assuming other nations reach theirs.
...leading to investment

Spending on the top 20 infrastructure projects (by cost) started or confirmed 2012-13

Low carbon projects
£23 billion

High carbon projects
£3.1 billion

£14.5bn private

£7bn public/private

£1.4bn public

£1.2bn private

£1.9bn public
...low carbon outcomes\(^6\)

Renewable electricity consumed per capita across the UK 2011-12

- **England**: £85.38 (5%)
- **Scotland**: £325.54 (22%)
- **Wales**: £147.35 (6%)
- **N Ireland**: £100.03 (11%)

Investment in renewables per capita
April 2011 – March 2012
Low carbon and environmental jobs across the UK 2010-11

Scotland

Financial services
37,700
Motor trade manufacture and retail
86,800
Telecoms
46,000

Wales

Low carbon and environmental
41,500

N Ireland

Low carbon and environmental
31,700

Green employment is spread evenly across the country and correlates exactly with the population of each nation, e.g., England has 84% of the population and 84% of the green jobs.
Global leadership

Where are the UK’s green export markets?

The UK exported low carbon and environmental goods and services to 52 countries in 2010-11, totalling £11.8bn
“In 2014-15, [green business] is expected to roughly halve the UK’s trade deficit”
CBI, 2012²
How do UK green exports compare with competitors?

The UK is the green financing capital of the world

One third of all global asset finance investment in new energy deals between 2007 and 2012 received both legal and financial advice from the UK.
A UK success story

We are often told of the benefits that come from creating a greener economy and the advantage that will come from being a first mover. It is now clear that we don’t need to wait for these benefits. The UK has moved and we are seeing the advantage.

Our low carbon and environmental sector has shown that it’s not just for the good times, but that it has continued to grow steadily even whilst broader economic activity slows.

This is the outcome of setting ambitious environmental targets and creating long term market incentives for green goods and services. It has given the private sector confidence to invest billions of pounds in these markets. In contrast, the UK’s high carbon infrastructure projects now have much lower leverage on private capital and are being propped up by greater proportions of public spending.

The return on our investment in greening the economy is being felt across the country, with nearly a million people now employed in providing low carbon and environmental goods and services, outstripping employment in other sectors such as telecoms.

Quietly and without fanfare, green business has become a UK success story, at home and abroad. We now export more green products and services to our competitors than we import from them, and we have become the green financing capital of the world.

This success should be celebrated. With greater public recognition and stronger confidence green businesses can help secure a faster and more resilient economic recovery.

Data sources

1 Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS), 2012, Low carbon environmental goods and services: report for 2010-11; Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2012, Quarterly national accounts Q4 2011; Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR), 2012, Economic and fiscal outlook

2 CBI, 2012, The colour of growth: maximising the potential of green business


5 HM Treasury, 2011, Infrastructure investment pipeline data


7 BIS, 2012, Low carbon environmental goods and services: report for 2010-11

8 Data courtesy of Bloomberg New Energy Finance

9 BIS, 2012, Low carbon environmental goods and services: report for 2010-11; UN, 2011, World population prospects: the 2010 revision

More detailed references are available at www.green-alliance.org.uk/UKsuccess
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Cover image
The UK has higher per capita green turnover than Germany,
Brazil and China.⁹

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