



NetRegs Awareness Survey 2016 Overall Results

Final Report

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Prepared by

progressive

Q Court, 3 Quality Street
Edinburgh, EH4 5BP
Tel: 0131 316 1900

69 St Vincent Street
Glasgow, G2 5TF
Tel. 0141 226 8895

Email: info@progressivepartnership.co.uk

Main Contacts:
Ruth Bryan
Diane McGregor



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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Background and Objectives

SEPA, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, is a public sector agency that acts as the environmental regulator and flood warning authority in Scotland. In partnership with the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), SEPA provides the NetRegs website NetRegs.org.uk, which offers free guidance to businesses in Scotland and Northern Ireland on corporate environmental responsibility, applicable key legislation and economical benefits related to adopting a responsible environmental approach to business. The website provides guidance for all businesses but is targeted mainly at small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Progressive was commissioned to conduct the 2016 research among SMEs in Scotland and Northern Ireland, to provide an up to date picture of current attitudes and awareness in relation to the NetRegs website and environmental issues. The research aimed to measure:

- Awareness and usage of the NetRegs website
- Attitudes towards respondents' own companies' environmental impact
- Internal systems, policies and/or behaviours relating to environmental management
- Perceived benefits attached to improved environmental performance
- Awareness of existing environmental legislation
- Previous interactions with external organisations regarding environmental issues
- The most effective channels through which information about environmental issues can be sent.

1.2 Method and Sample

In total, 1,006 interviews were conducted with Scottish and Northern Irish SMEs during February 2016. The survey was conducted by Progressive's telephone interviewers using Computer-Aided Telephone Interviewing (CATI). The questionnaire was largely based on the 2009 version although it was amended slightly to include new areas of interest to both SEPA and NIEA.

The sample was designed to ensure a good spread of SMEs were included in relation to industry sector and business size. The survey script also ensured that interviewers spoke to the person in the business who deals with environmental issues and decisions, such as waste management or water and energy use. The sample was designed to focus on agriculture, construction, healthcare, hotels and restaurants, and transport, in line with previous surveys; however, other sectors, such as education, financial services and food and drink manufacturers, were also included to ensure the sample was broadly representative of all SME businesses in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Full details of the sample profile are included in the main body of this report.

1.3 Key Findings

1.3.1 Measures to address environmental issues

The vast majority of SME businesses in Scotland and Northern Ireland have taken at least some action to reduce harm to the environment. When asked what, if any, practical measures their organisation had ever introduced aimed at preventing or reducing harm to the environment, the majority of respondents (77%) spontaneously mentioned at least one measure, and this figure rose to 92% when respondents were prompted with a list of possible measures. The most common measures implemented related to dealing with waste; either recycling waste (mentioned by 84%) or

cutting down on waste (mentioned by 61%). Responses varied by business size, with respondents from the largest organisations (50+ employees) being most likely to report undertaking most of these harm reduction measures and the smallest organisations being least likely to take such actions.

The most proactive business sector was hotels and restaurants. Respondents from this sector were the most likely to mention recycling business waste, cutting down business waste, making energy efficiency or water reduction improvements and making someone in the company responsible for environmental matters. Perhaps unsurprisingly construction and transport companies were the most likely to mention reducing transport emissions and reducing transport costs.

Very few respondents reported that they had **never** introduced any measures to reduce harm to the environment. However, among those who had not the most common reason given was that they did not have time to think about it or it is not a business priority (mentioned by a third of these respondents).

1.3.2 Implementation of an Environmental Management System (EMS) or Environmental Policy

Across the sample as a whole, just under one in five (17%) said their company had an Environmental Management System, such as an ISO 14001, BS 8555 or Green ticks / Green Dragon standard. The proportion with an EMS in place was far higher, however, amongst the larger companies (36%), while the smallest organisations were least likely to have an EMS (9%). Respondents working in the construction industry were most likely industry sector to report having an EMS (32%).

Those respondents who reported that they did not have an EMS were asked if they had an environmental policy. In total, 36% of these organisations reported having an environmental policy, meaning that just under half (47%) of the sample overall had either an EMS **or** an environmental policy in place. Again, the largest organisations (70%) were most likely to have an EMS or environmental policy, as were those in the construction sector (54%).

The most common reasons given for taking steps to improve environmental performance were improving the business's reputation / green credentials (mentioned by 41%), financial pressures (23%) and suggestions from within the business (18%).

The most frequently reported benefits of taking these steps included reduced operating costs (53%) and reduced risk of prosecution or fines (47%). These benefits could be highlighted in communications encouraging businesses to implement measures to improve their environmental performance.

The survey also asked those **who did not** have an EMS or environmental policy how useful they felt such a policy would be. The majority of this sub-group did not feel this would be useful (63% overall said it would be of no use or of little use). Only 25% felt it would be quite or very useful, although 12% said they did not know. The smallest organisations were least likely to think an EMS or environmental policy would be quite or very useful (17% of those with fewer than 10 employees thought this). Promoting the purpose and benefits of having an EMS or policy might help improve uptake, especially since a sizeable minority said they did not know whether it would be useful to their business or not.

As a further measure of the commitment of businesses to environmental harm reduction, respondents were also asked how likely they were to invest money in improving their environmental performance over the next 12 months. In total, 36% reported that they were very or quite likely to

invest. Reflecting the general pattern of response, the smallest organisations were least likely to predict investment in their environmental performance (29% v 38% 10-49 and 59% 50+). Therefore, targeting communications to smaller organisations to make it clear that environmental policies and/or investment are relevant to them might help improve rates of future investment.

1.3.3 Awareness of the environment and legislation

When respondents were asked to state (without any prompting) what activities, if any, their organisation undertakes which could be regarded as harmful to the environment, 40% spontaneously mentioned at least one. However, when prompted with a list of potentially harmful activities, the proportion reporting that their company undertook at least one rose to 76%. Clearly some of the harmful activities are not 'top of mind' among respondents, suggesting a need to raise awareness of these issues.

Taking the spontaneous and prompted responses together, the most commonly mentioned harmful activities were transport (mentioned by 48%), storing waste on site prior to removal (36%), storing chemicals, fuels or oils (34%) and producing or using packaging (31%).

It was also important to understand how aware SME businesses are of relevant environmental legislation. When prompted with a list of regulations and legislation, the majority recognised at least one, with awareness highest for Food Waste Regulations (62%) and the Duty of Care Regulations (60%). In Northern Ireland awareness was also particularly high for Hazardous Waste Regulations (70% of NI sample were aware).

There was a very clear pattern in responses across business size for this question, with the largest organisations being the most aware of each of the regulations / legislation. These findings provide further evidence of a need to raise awareness of environmental issues among the smallest businesses.

1.3.4 Sources of information, advice and support

Overall, 24% of the sample had ever been in contact with any business support organisations to discuss environmental issues – although this figure was higher among the largest organisations (44%, v 17% of the smallest organisations). The most commonly mentioned organisation was NIEA/SEPA (29%), followed by the local council (23%). A large number of sector specific organisations were also listed. It is encouraging that the environmental regulator was mentioned by almost three in ten of those who had sought help, although there is clearly scope to increase the proportion of businesses contacting organisations for help in the first place.

1.3.5 Awareness and use of NetRegs

Only a minority of respondents (12%) reported that they were aware of NetRegs. Reflecting previous findings, awareness was higher among the larger organisations (28%, v 7% among the smallest companies). Respondents from construction businesses were most likely to say they had heard of NetRegs (16%), while those from the hotels and restaurants (6%) and healthcare sectors (7%) were least likely to be aware of the website. The research therefore suggests that there is some considerable scope to raise awareness of the NetRegs website and the benefits it can offer businesses.

Indeed, when those who had not heard of NetRegs were given a description of the service and then asked how useful they would find it, the majority (56%) thought the site would be quite or very

useful. Reflecting awareness figures, the perceived usefulness of the site increased with size of company, with 50% of the smallest organisations anticipating it would be useful, compared to 68% of the largest businesses. Higher levels of anticipated value were also found in the healthcare, hotels/restaurants and construction sectors, compared to the transport and agriculture sectors. These findings suggest that lack of awareness is more of a barrier to uptake of the website than negative perceptions of the value of the site. Therefore, more widespread promotion of the NetRegs website is likely to lead to greater uptake. Perhaps the smallest organisations, and those in transport and agriculture, need more focused promotional activity to persuade them that it is relevant and useful.

Just over half (56%) of those who had heard of NetRegs said that they had used it. This equates to 7% of the total sample who have used the NetRegs website. Ratings of NetRegs in terms of usefulness and individual aspects of the website were generally positive. The highest ratings were given for keeping up to date with new legislation, legislation lists and environmental guidance. The good practice videos, e-learning tools and self-assessment tool were given slightly lower ratings by those who had used them, although it should be noted that they were not used by as many respondents – the largest proportions answered ‘don’t know / not applicable’.

1.3.6 Current and future support from SEPA

When respondents were asked whether they had ever received support from NIEA/SEPA to help them deal with environmental issues, 13% said that they had, although this figure was higher among the largest organisations (26%). Ratings of the support received were generally high, with 92% reporting that they were very or quite satisfied. The survey did not explore awareness of NIEA/SEPA or what the environmental regulators do; however, the fact that a relatively small proportion had sought help from NIEA/SEPA suggests that promotion of the advice available may help raise awareness of their services.

SEPA wanted to gauge levels of support for various proposed actions that could help businesses generate opportunities from environmental improvements. Respondents showed broad support for all of the proposed actions, with very small proportions saying they thought these would be not very or not at all useful. The most popular suggestions were keeping businesses informed about practices and new technology that will improve their sustainability, providing a single point of contact at a NIEA/SEPA local office and promoting good practice through business case studies. Reflecting a consistent pattern of response throughout the data, the largest organisations were the most positive about the proposed actions and the smallest organisations were the least positive.

1.3.7 Information sources

Finally, the survey focused on information sources that respondents were likely to use to find out about environmental issues relating to their business. The most commonly mentioned information source was internet searches – in total 59% identified the internet as something they would use, and 52% said this would be the one source they would be most likely to use. Very few respondents mentioned other sources of information, and indeed a small proportion (11%) stated they would not use any information sources at all. Any action that NIEA/SEPA can take to ensure a good web presence when searching for relevant terms will help organisations find them as a source of advice.

1.4 Conclusions

SME business in Scotland and Northern Ireland are clearly motivated to ensure that they operate in a way that minimises any harmful impact on the environment. Almost all respondents reported that

their business had implemented measures to reduce environmental harm, although motivations to do so were varied. They also understand the business benefits of implementing environmental protection measures, such as reducing operating costs, reducing the risk of prosecution and improved relations with customers. However, there were significant variances in findings by size of company, with larger organisations (with more than 50 employees) the most aware of potentially harmful activities and the relevant legislation, and the most likely to have taken steps to reduce their environmental impact. The smallest companies (those with less than 10 employees) tended to have lower levels of awareness, and were also less likely to perceive value in implementing or investing in measures to reduce environmental impact.

The research, therefore, suggests that the smaller SMEs require information and advice on how their operations could potentially harm the environment, and how they could minimise these harms. There is also a need, however, to persuade these organisations of the business benefits and opportunities that investment in such harm reduction measures could bring.

One method which could be used to raise awareness amongst all SME businesses is the NetRegs website. Indeed, the internet is the key source of information on environmental issues and NIEA/SEPA was the organisation most likely to have been contacted by those who have previously sought advice in this area (indicating a high level of trust and confidence in its advice). However, the NetRegs site itself is not being widely utilised by SME companies, despite the fact that it is very well regarded amongst those who have used it. Awareness seems to be the main barrier preventing uptake, rather than a lack of relevance or perceived usefulness; the majority of those who had not used the site thought that it would be something that could be useful to their business.

The findings therefore provide clear evidence of the potential value of NetRegs, as well as the need for it, especially amongst smaller SMEs. Focused promotion of the site, and regarding the value of engagement in environmental harm reduction measures, on smaller SMEs will drive visits to the site and potentially lead to improved environmental performance within this sector.

2. Background and Objectives

2.1 Background

SEPA, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, is a public sector agency that acts as the environmental regulator and flood warning authority in Scotland. In partnership with the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), SEPA provides the NetRegs website NetRegs.org.uk, which offers free guidance to businesses in Scotland and Northern Ireland on corporate environmental responsibility, applicable key legislation and economical benefits related to adopting a responsible environmental approach to business. The website provides guidance for all businesses but is targeted mainly at small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The previous NetRegs website (NetRegs.gov.uk) catered for all four constituent countries of the UK and included input from the Environment Agency in England and Wales, which exited the partnership in 2010.

Since 2002, SEPA has commissioned a number of telephone surveys of SMEs in the UK to gauge awareness of the NetRegs website, knowledge of environmental legislation, and environmental performance. Over the course of the research, its scope has narrowed from 28 business sectors to focus on 15 in 2005/7 and then just 10 in 2009. This allowed for a more representative data set across each of the four countries that make up the UK.

The 2013 survey also focused on 10 business sectors but was only conducted in Scotland and Northern Ireland, in keeping with the exit of the Environment Agency from the NetRegs partnership. This used a telephone survey with an online option and in total 412 responses were received.

Progressive was commissioned to conduct the 2016 research among SMEs in Scotland and Northern Ireland, to provide an up to date picture of current attitudes and awareness in relation to the NetRegs website and environmental issues.

2.2 Aims and objectives

The research aimed to measure:

- Awareness and usage of the NetRegs website
- Attitudes towards respondents' own companies' environmental impact
- Internal systems, policies and/or behaviours relating to environmental management
- Perceived benefits attached to improved environmental performance
- Awareness of existing environmental legislation
- Previous interactions with external organisations regarding environmental issues
- The most effective channels through which information about environmental issues can be sent.

The research was designed to meet current information requirements while bearing in mind the desire to provide time series analysis to track change since the 2009 survey.

This report outlines 2016 findings from the survey of SMEs in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Separate reports have also been provided analysing data for each country individually. These separate reports also include comparisons to the 2009 data. Comparisons to 2009 are not included in this report as no combined Scotland/Northern Ireland data is available for 2009.

3. Method and Sample

3.1 Introduction

In total, 1,006 interviews were conducted with Scottish and Northern Irish SMEs during February 2016. The survey was conducted by Progressive’s telephone interviewers using Computer-Aided Telephone Interviewing (CATI). The questionnaire was largely based on the 2009 version, although it was amended slightly to include new areas of interest to both SEPA and NIEA. A copy of the survey questionnaire is included in Appendix 1.

3.2 Sampling

The sample was designed to ensure a good spread of SMEs were included in relation to industry sector and business size. The survey script also ensured that interviewers spoke to the person in the business who deals with environmental issues and decisions, such as waste management or water and energy use. The final sample profile is outlined in Table 1. The sample was designed to focus on agriculture, construction, healthcare, hotels and restaurants, and transport. These were also the core sectors included in the 2009 survey.

Table 1: Sample profile

Industry sector	No.	%
Agriculture	163	16%
Construction	158	16%
Healthcare	156	16%
Hotels and restaurants	161	16%
Transport	132	13%
Education	61	6%
Equipment and machinery	39	4%
Financial services	44	4%
Food and drink manufacturer	41	4%
Retail and wholesale	51	5%
Business size	No.	%
<10 employees	543	54%
10-49 employees	295	29%
50+ employees	168	17%

Respondent Job Title	No.	%
Owner/MD/Partner	489	49%
Director/Company secretary	131	13%
Office manager/personnel manager/Admin/Secretary/PA etc	167	17%
Works/production/site/farm manager	68	7%
Technical manager/officer (e.g. health and safety, quality, contracts)	46	5%
Environmental manager/officer	30	3%
Other	75	7%

Base (all): 1,006

A note on business size

A sample of businesses in Scotland and Northern Ireland was purchased to be used as the sampling frame for the research. This sample had business size and sector detailed for each contact on the file and this information was used for quota control purposes to ensure a good spread of businesses was included in the research. However, a question was also asked in the survey about the number of employees the business had, and this data has been used for analysis and reporting (rather than the business size detailed on the sample file). In instances where the respondent did not know their business size, the sample categorisation information has been used. The overall spread is broadly similar, although there are slightly more very small businesses (<10 employees) and slightly fewer mid-size businesses (10-49 employees) in the sample when using respondents’ own estimates compared to the quota targets derived using the sample file data.

For the 2016 research, it was agreed not to screen businesses of 250+ employees out of the survey, as had been the case in 2009. However, the final number of organisations over 250 was small (a total of 31 respondents).

The overall sample size of 1,006 provides a dataset with a margin of error of between $\pm 0.61\%$ and $\pm 3.09\%$, calculated at the 95% confidence level (the market research industry standard)¹.

3.3 Analysis and reporting

This report outlines the 2016 survey findings for the whole sample, providing analysis by industry sector (with a focus on the core sectors noted earlier, where larger sample sizes allow sub-group analysis) and business size.

Raw data and cross-tabulations have been provided under separate cover.

Reporting conventions

Throughout this report, any differences noted between sub-groups are statistically significant to the 95% confidence level.

Standard notation is used in tables with '*' used to indicate results of less than 1% and '-' used to indicate no respondents gave a particular answer. For ease of reading the results, '1%' and '2%' notations have been left off the charts.

For questions using ratings scales, mean scores have been calculated as follows:

- Usefulness: scored from 1 (of no use) to 4 (very useful) or from 1 (not at all useful) to 4 (very useful), depending on the question wording
- Likelihood: scored from 1 (very unlikely) to 4 (very likely)
- Satisfaction: scored from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 4 (very satisfied).

Where such mean scores are presented, these exclude all 'don't know / not applicable' responses.

¹ Please note that the survey did not use random sampling which means that we cannot provide statistically precise margins of error or significance testing as the sampling type is non-probability. The margins of error outlined should therefore be treated as indicative, based on an equivalent probability sample.

4. Research Findings

4.1 Measures to address environmental issues

4.1.1 Measures taken to prevent or reduce harm to the environment

Respondents were asked what, if any, practical measures their organisation had ever introduced aimed at preventing or reducing harm to the environment. Interviewers first coded respondents' spontaneous, top of mind responses and then prompted them with a list of measures. Across the sample as a whole, 77% spontaneously mentioned at least one measure their business had implemented. However, when prompted with a list of possible measures, this figure rose to 92% overall.

As illustrated by Table 2, there was some variation in responses across core industry sectors and by business size. The smallest organisations were least likely to report implementing any of these measures, either spontaneously or when prompted. The hotel and restaurant sector was the most likely to spontaneously cite any actions taken to reduce harm to the environment (86%).

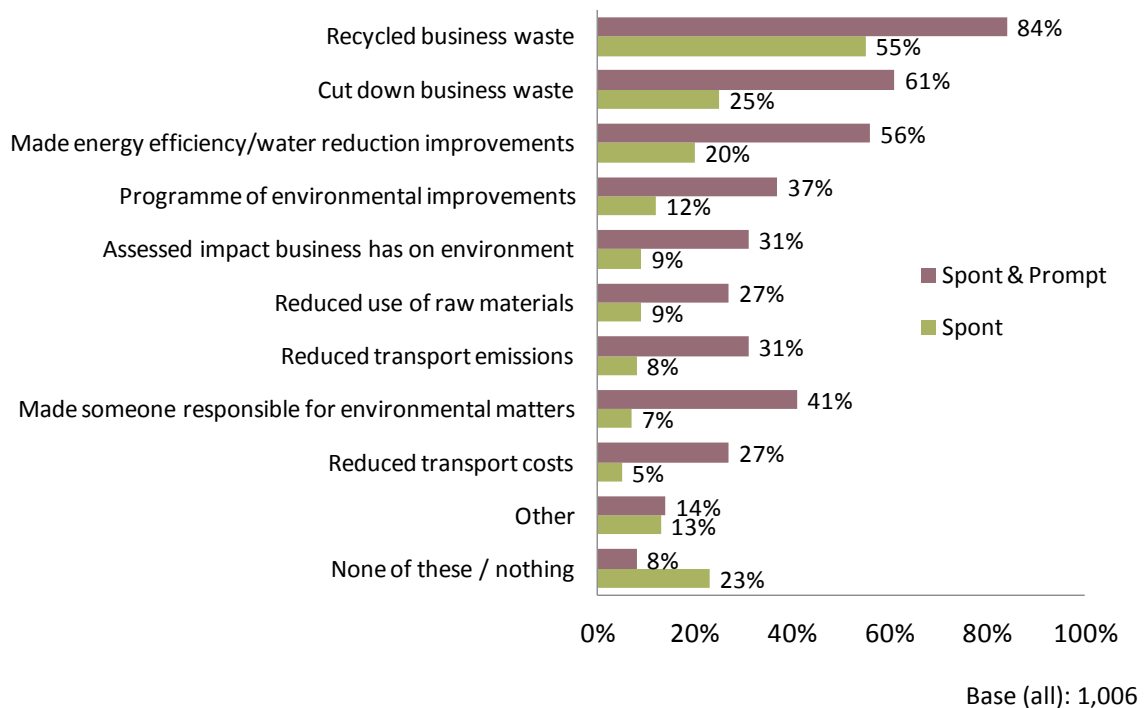
Table 2: Whether companies reported introducing practical measures aimed at preventing or reducing harm to the environment (spontaneous and all responses)

Business size	Proportion taking at least 1 action		Base
	Spontaneous	Spont & prompt	
<10	70%	89%	543
10-49	81%	97%	295
50+	89%	98%	168
Core sector			
Agriculture	72%	93%	163
Construction	75%	89%	158
Healthcare	76%	94%	156
Hotels & restaurants	86%	97%	161
Transport	68%	83%	132
Sample average	77%	92%	1,006

Figure 1 shows the detailed responses to this question; as can be seen here, the most common spontaneous responses were recycling business waste (mentioned by 55%), cutting down business waste (25%) and making energy efficiency or water reduction improvements (20%). Relatively small proportions spontaneously mentioned any other kind of activity to prevent or reduce harm to the environment.

However, upon prompting with the list of practical measures, a higher proportion reported undertaking all of these activities – with the majority reporting recycling (84%), cutting down waste (61%) and making energy efficiency/water reduction improvements (56%). While around a quarter (23%) of respondents initially said they had not introduced any practical measures to reduce their impact on the environment, when prompted with the list of possible measures this fell to 8%.

Figure 1: Practical measures introduced aimed at preventing or reducing harm to the environment (spontaneous and prompted)



'Other' responses were given by 127 respondents spontaneously; the main categories of responses were:

- Better waste storage/disposal (mentioned by 23 respondents)
- Use of third party advice/guidelines (11)
- Solar panels (8)
- Mentions of ISO 14001/15001 (8)
- Details of a specific policy (that had been designed not necessarily implemented) (7)
- Low energy / LED bulbs (7)
- Planting trees (7).

There were some clear differences between organisations of different sizes in relation to undertaking some of these actions. For the following actions, there were significant differences between all three business sizes:

- Making energy efficiency/water reduction improvements - <10 (44%); 10-49 (66%); 50+ (76%)
- Making someone in the company responsible - <10 (30%); 10-49 (49%); 50+ (60%)
- Carrying out a programme of improvements - <10 (27%); 10-49 (44%); 50+ (59%)
- Assessing the business's impact on the environment - <10 (22%); 10-49 (36%); 50+ (50%).

In addition, the smallest organisations were significantly less likely than the two other groups to report undertaking the following measures:

- Cutting down business waste - <10 (52%); 10-49 (68%); 50+ (76%)
- Recycling business waste - <10 (78%); 10-49 (92%); 50+ (88%)

As detailed in Table 3, there was also variation in responses across the core industry sectors. For example, hotels and restaurants were the most likely to have undertaken a range of measures, including recycling business waste (93%), cutting down business waste (71%), making energy efficiency or water reduction improvements (71%) and making someone in the company responsible for environmental matters (46%). Construction and transport companies were the most likely to mention reducing transport emissions (construction - 46%; transport - 49%) and reducing transport costs (construction - 45%; transport - 37%).

Table 3: Practical measures undertaken by core industry sector

Practical measures to protect / reduce harm (spontaneous and prompted)	Agriculture	Construction	Healthcare	Hotels & restaurants	Transport
Assessed impact business has on the environment	31%	35%	26%	30%	20%
Carried out a programme of environmental improvements	40%	37%	33%	34%	28%
Made someone in the company responsible for environmental matters	32%	39%	38%	46%	35%
Made any energy efficiency or water reduction improvements	53%	48%	56%	71%	33%
Cut down business waste	53%	65%	59%	71%	45%
Recycled business waste	79%	83%	85%	93%	67%
Reduced transport emissions	32%	46%	13%	18%	49%
Reduced transport costs	26%	45%	12%	13%	37%
Reduced use of raw materials	30%	35%	19%	27%	17%
Other environmental activity	20%	12%	12%	15%	15%
None of these / nothing	7%	11%	6%	3%	17%
Base	163	158	156	161	132

4.1.2 Reasons for not taking measures to reduce harm to the environment

Those who had never introduced any measures to reduce harm to the environment were asked what had prevented them from doing so. As shown in Table 4, the most common reason, given by a third of these respondents (33%) was that they did not have time to think about it or it is not a business priority. Around a fifth (21%) said they did not know what actions to take or had just never thought about it (also 21%).

Table 4: Reasons for not taking measures to reduce harm to the environment

Reasons for not taking measures to reduce harm	%
Don't have time to think about it / it is not a priority for the business	33%
Don't know what actions to take	21%
Have never thought about it	21%
It is too expensive / cost issues	5%
Other ²	17%
Don't know	22%
Base	76

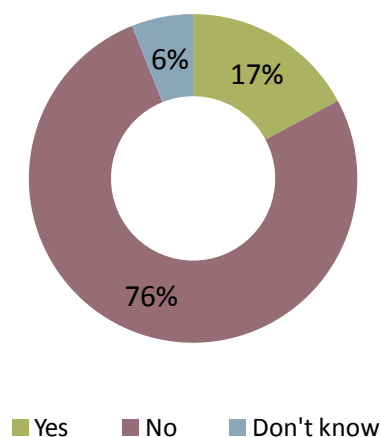
² 'Other' responses were given by 13 respondents. A full list of responses has been provided separately.

4.2 Implementation of an Environmental Management System (EMS) or Environmental Policy

4.2.1 Whether companies have an Environmental Management System

Across the sample as a whole, 17% said their company had an Environmental Management System such as an ISO 14001, BS 8555 or Green ticks / Green Dragon standard (see Figure 2). Six per cent said they did not know, but most (76%) said they did not have an EMS.

Figure 2: Whether companies have implemented an Environmental Management System



Base (all): 1,006

The proportion of companies with an EMS varied in relation to business size and core industry sector, as outlined in Table 5. Those with fewer than 10 employees were least likely to have an EMS (9%), when compared to companies with 10-49 employees (22%) and those with more than 50 employees (36%). Respondents working in the construction industry were more likely to report having an EMS (32%) than those working within the other core sectors.

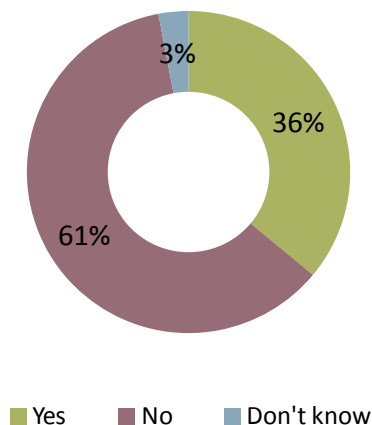
Table 5: Whether companies had an EMS by business size and core industry sector

Business size	Proportion with an EMS	Base
<10	9%	543
10-49	22%	295
50+	36%	168
Core sector		
Agriculture	11%	163
Construction	32%	158
Healthcare	12%	156
Hotels & restaurants	10%	161
Transport	17%	132
Sample average	17%	1,006

4.2.2 Whether companies have an Environmental Policy

Those who did not have an EMS in place were asked if they had an Environmental policy, and just over a third (36%) said yes (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Whether companies without an EMS have an environmental policy



Base (all who did not have an EMS): 831

Taking these two questions together, just under half (47%) of the sample overall had either an EMS or an environmental policy in place.

Again, there was variation between businesses in terms of size and sector in relation to having this kind of policy in place. As shown in Table 6, the largest organisations (70% of >50 employees) were most likely to have an EMS or environmental policy. A marginally higher proportion of companies in the construction sector reported having an EMS or environmental policy, however, the differences across industry sectors are not statistically significant.

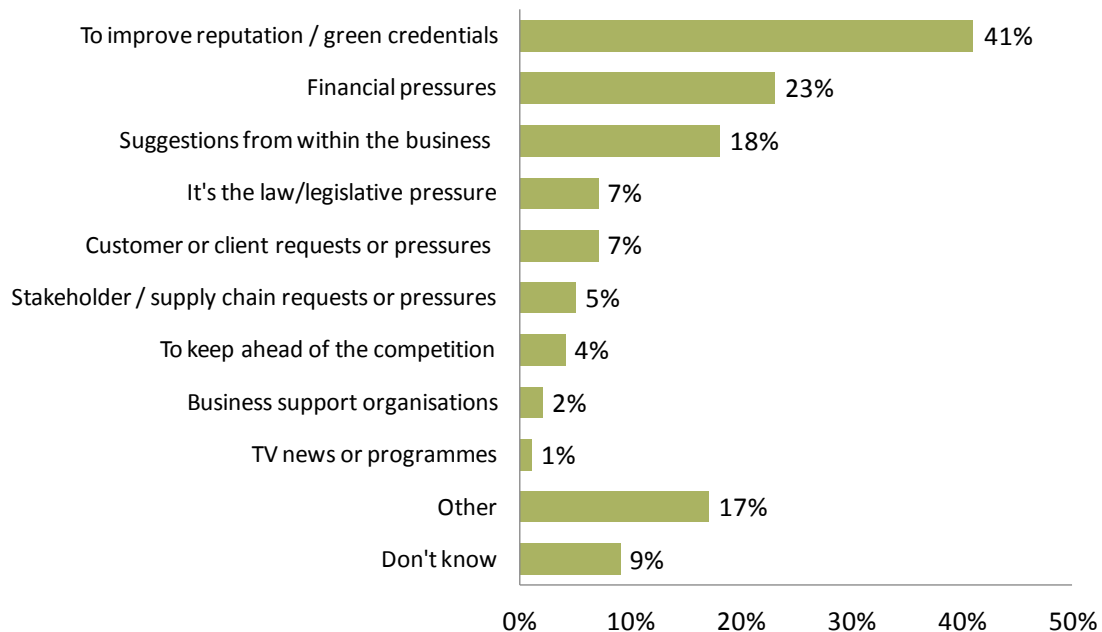
Table 6: Whether companies had an EMS/environmental policy by business size and core industry sector

Business size	Proportion with EMS / environmental policy	Base
<10	34%	543
10-49	57%	295
50+	70%	168
Core sector		
Agriculture	47%	163
Construction	54%	158
Healthcare	47%	156
Hotels & restaurants	39%	161
Transport	41%	132
Sample average	47%	1,006

4.2.3 What prompted improvements to environmental performance

Respondents who had mentioned taking any actions to improve their environmental performance, or who had an EMS or environmental policy in place, were asked what had prompted them to take these steps. As illustrated in Figure 4, improving their reputation / green credentials was the most common prompt to take action, mentioned by 41%. Financial pressures (23%) and suggestions from within the business (18%) were also commonly reported reasons for taking steps to improve environmental performance.

Figure 4: What prompted respondents to take steps to improve their environmental performance



Base (all who had taken at least one action to improve performance, and/or who had an EMS or environmental policy): 937

In total, 161 respondents mentioned an 'other' response to this question. The most common reasons given were:

- Comments relating to a general awareness of environmental issues and/or the importance of the environment (mentioned by 77 respondents)
- Mentions of specific policy initiatives/a SEPA visit (18)
- Comments relating to greater profit / improved business (18).

The largest organisations were more likely than the smallest to mention stakeholder / supply chain requests or pressures (10% of those with 50+ employees v 4% of those with <10 employees) and customer or client requests or pressures (13% v 5%).

The smallest organisations were less likely than the middle or largest organisations in the sample to mention suggestions from within the business (13% of those with < 10 employees, v 21% 10-49 and 25% 50+), keeping ahead of the competition (2%, v 6% and 8%) and improving their green credentials (34%, v 46% and 51%).

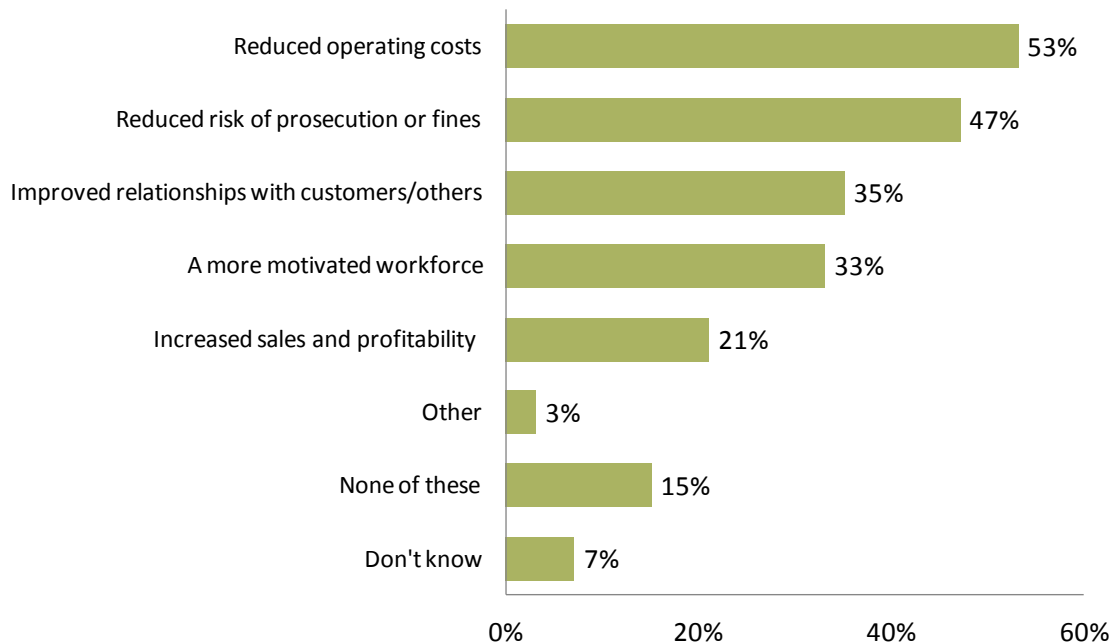
There were very few differences in responses to this question in relation to the core industry sectors, with the exception of being prompted to improve their reputation / green credentials – this

was most commonly reported by those in hotels and restaurants (51%) and least likely to be mentioned by agriculture businesses (25%).

4.2.4 Benefits of making environmental improvements

These respondents were also asked whether their business had benefited as a result of taking steps to improve environmental performance. The most commonly reported benefits were reduced operating costs, and reduced risk of prosecution or fines (both mentioned by around half the sample – 53% and 47% respectively) – see Figure 5.

Figure 5: Benefits to the business of environmental improvements



Base (all who had taken at least one action to improve performance, and/or who had an EMS or environmental policy): 937

The likelihood of reporting each of these benefits increased with the size of the business, with the largest organisations tending to report the greatest benefits. Smaller (18%) and medium sized (15%) organisations were more likely to state they had not seen any benefits than larger organisations (6% of those with over 50 employees).

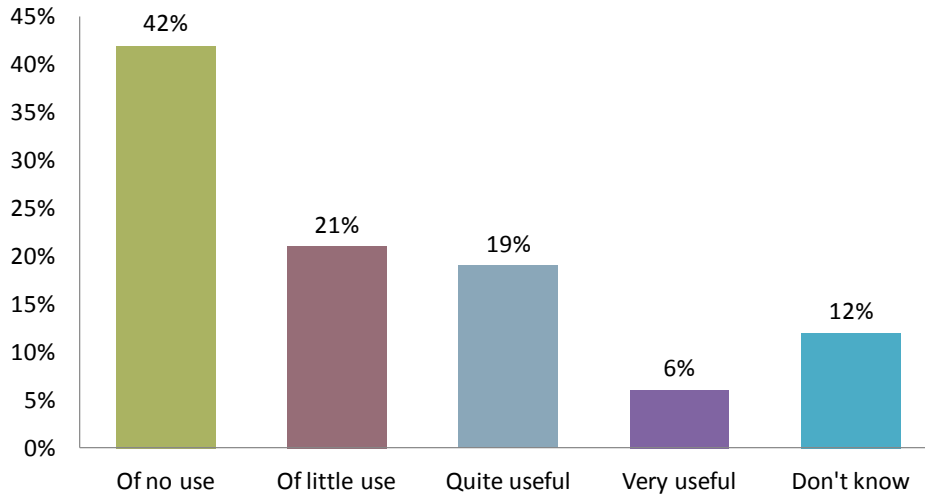
Among the core industry sectors, the following patterns emerged:

- Hotels and restaurants (59%) and construction businesses (53%) were most likely of all the core sectors to report reduced operating costs
- Businesses from the construction sector were most likely to report improved relationships with customers/others (54%) and reduced risk of prosecution or fines (58%)
- Hotels and restaurants (40%) and construction companies (37%) were the most likely to mention a more motivated workforce.

4.2.5 Perceived usefulness of an EMS or Environmental Policy

The survey also asked those **who did not** have an EMS or environmental policy how useful they felt such a policy would be. The majority did not feel this would be useful (63% overall said it would be of no use or of little use). Only 25% felt it would be quite or very useful, although 12% said they did not know (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: How useful an EMS or environmental policy would be



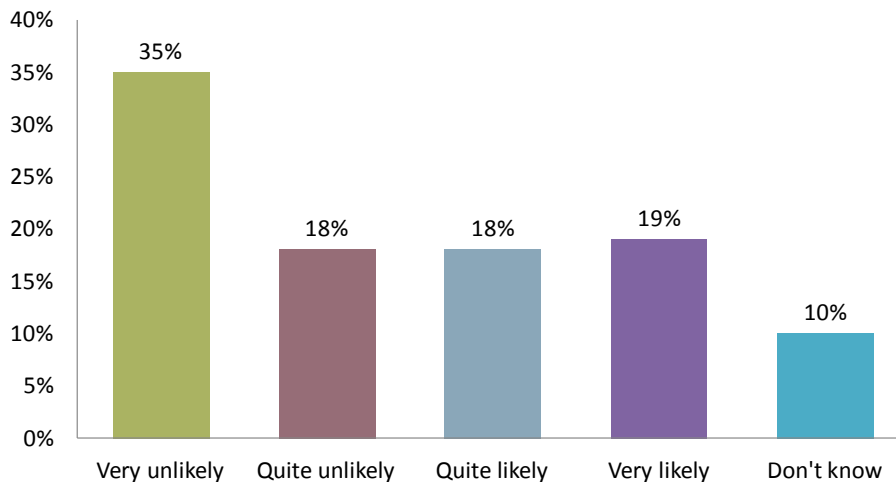
Base (all **without** an EMS or environmental policy): 534

Respondents from the smallest organisations were the least likely to report that they thought an environmental policy would be quite or very useful – 17% of those from firms with fewer than 10 employees anticipated a policy would be useful, compared to 45% of those with 10-49 and 36% of those with 50+.

4.2.6 Likelihood to invest in environmental performance

All respondents were asked how likely they were to invest money in improving their environmental performance over the next 12 months. Just over a third (36%) reported that they were very or quite likely to invest, while 53% said they were unlikely to do this, and 10% said they did not know (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Likelihood to invest in environmental performance in the next 12 months



There was a clear pattern in responses to this question based on the size of the organisation, with the smallest organisations being least likely to predict investment in their environmental performance (only 29% said it was very or quite likely), compared to the medium sized firms (38% of those with 10-49 employees) and the largest organisations (59% of those with 50+ employees). The differences between each of the three size bands were statistically significant.

The healthcare sector was found to be the most least to consider investing in improving their environmental performance over the next 12 months. In total, only 27% of respondents within this sector considered such investment to be very or quite likely.

4.3 Awareness of the environment and legislation

4.3.1 Activities that may harm the environment

Respondents were asked what activities, if any, their organisation undertakes which could be regarded as harmful to the environment. Across the whole sample, 40% spontaneously mentioned at least one activity their business did which could be regarded as harmful to the environment, although this rose to 76% when prompted with a list of potentially harmful activities.

There was some variation in responses across core industry sectors and by business size, as outlined in Table 7. As shown here, the smallest organisations were least likely to report undertaking harmful activities (36% spontaneous; 73% when prompted), while the largest organisations were most likely to report this (50% spontaneous; 83% prompted). Transport companies were most likely to spontaneously mention such activities (59%). When prompted, similarly high proportions of businesses in the transport, agriculture and construction sectors mentioned harmful activities. Respondents within the healthcare sector were less likely than others to believe their activities could be harmful to the environment.

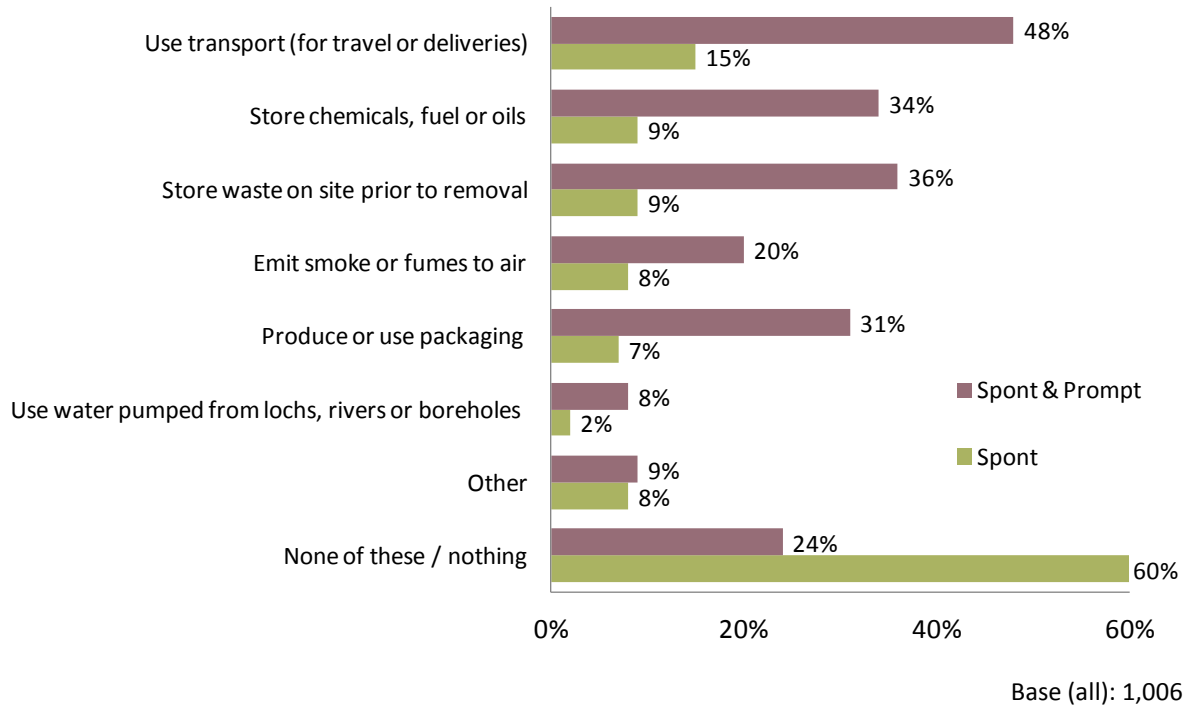
Table 7: Whether companies reported undertaking harmful activities by business size and core industry sector (spontaneous and all responses)

Business size	Proportion undertaking at least 1 harmful activity		Base
	Spontaneous	Spont & prompt	
<10	36%	73%	543
10-49	43%	80%	295
50+	50%	83%	168
Core sector			
Agriculture	44%	85%	163
Construction	43%	82%	158
Healthcare	33%	63%	156
Hotels & restaurants	35%	75%	161
Transport	59%	85%	132
Sample average	40%	76%	1,006

Figure 8 shows the detailed responses to this question. A majority (60%) said 'none of these' when asked for a spontaneous response. The most common activity mentioned spontaneously was using transport for travel or deliveries, mentioned by 15%.

However, when prompted with the list, a higher proportion mentioned each of these harmful activities. Taking the spontaneous and prompted responses together, 48% mentioned transport, 36% said they store waste on site prior to removal, 34% store chemicals, fuels or oils and 31% reported producing or using packaging. Around a quarter (24%) reported doing none of these things when prompted with the list.

Figure 8: Activities undertaken which could be regarded as harmful to the environment (spontaneous and prompted)



Among the 83 respondents who spontaneously mentioned an 'other' activity that may harm the environment, the most common responses were:

- References to waste collection (mentioned by 20 respondents)
- Use of chemicals/pesticides on land (12)
- Electricity overuse/heating (12)
- Reference to livestock/slurry (7).

Taking spontaneous and prompted responses together, the smallest organisations were the least likely to report storing waste on site prior to removal (26% <10 said they did this, v 47% of 10-49 and 53% of 50+), or produce or use packaging (24%, v 37% and 43%), while the largest organisations were most likely to report storing chemicals, fuel or oils (47%, compared to 30% of <10 and 33% of 10-49). The smallest organisations were also the most likely to say they did 'none of these' (27% <10, v 20% 10-49 and 17% 50+).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the activities undertaken varied by industry sector. Among the core industry sectors, the following patterns emerged:

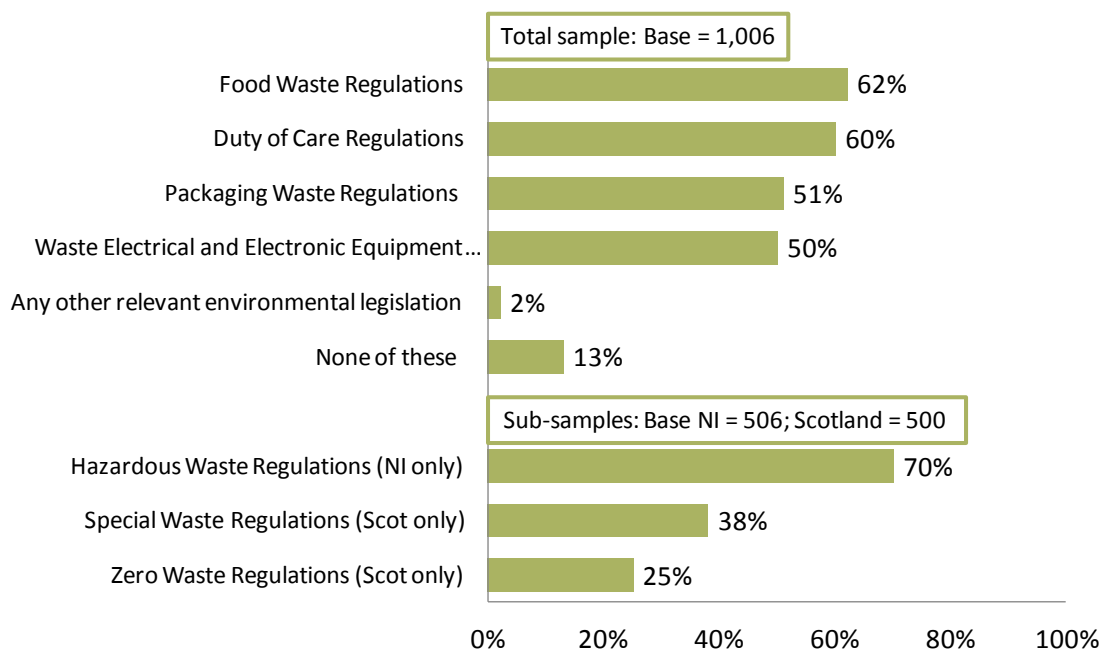
- The sectors most likely to store waste on site prior to removal were hotels and restaurants (47%) and healthcare (41%)
- Transport companies were the most likely to use transport for travel or deliveries (75%) followed by construction (69%)

- Those in the hotels and restaurants industry were the most likely to report using or producing packaging (39%)
- Transport companies were the most likely to report emitting smoke or fumes (36%)
- Agriculture businesses were the most likely to report storing chemicals, fuels or oils (56%) or using water pumped from lochs, rivers or boreholes (28%).

4.3.2 Awareness of environmental regulation and legislation

The survey also addressed awareness of relevant legislation; respondents were therefore asked which of the following environmental regulations / legislation they had heard of. Across the total sample, awareness was highest for Food Waste Regulations (62%) and the Duty of Care Regulations (60%). In Northern Ireland awareness was also particularly high for Hazardous Waste Regulations (70% of NI sample were aware). Around one in ten (13%) said they had not heard of any of these regulations.

Figure 9: Environmental regulation or legislation respondents had heard of



There was a very clear pattern in responses across business size for this question, with the largest organisations being the most aware of each of the regulations / legislation. Overall, 19% of organisations with fewer than 10 employees had not heard of any of these regulations, compared to just 7% of those with 10-49 employees and 4% of those with 50+ employees.

Among the core industry sectors:

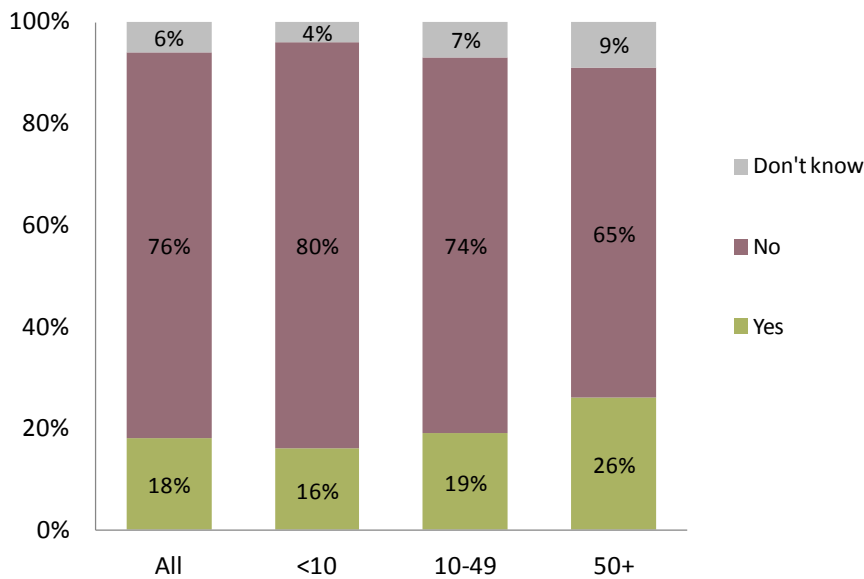
- Hotels and restaurants were most likely to be aware of the Food Waste Regulations (78%)
- Construction businesses were most likely to have heard of the WEEE regulations (63%)
- Construction and healthcare businesses in Scotland were most likely to be aware of Special Waste Regulations (both 51%)
- Healthcare businesses in Northern Ireland were the most likely to be aware of Hazardous Waste Regulations (84%)

- Respondents from transport (22%) were most likely to say they had not heard of any of these regulations or legislation.

4.3.3 Permits, licences and exemptions

All respondents were asked whether their business requires a permit, licence or exemption from SEPA in order to carry out its activities. Overall, 18% confirmed that this is a requirement (see Figure 10). The largest organisations were more likely than the smallest organisations to report needing a permit, licence or exemption (26% of those with 50+ employees said yes, compared 19% of businesses with 10-49 employees and 16% of those with <10).

Figure 10: Whether respondents' companies need a permit, licence or exemption from NIEA/SEPA



Base (all): 1,006

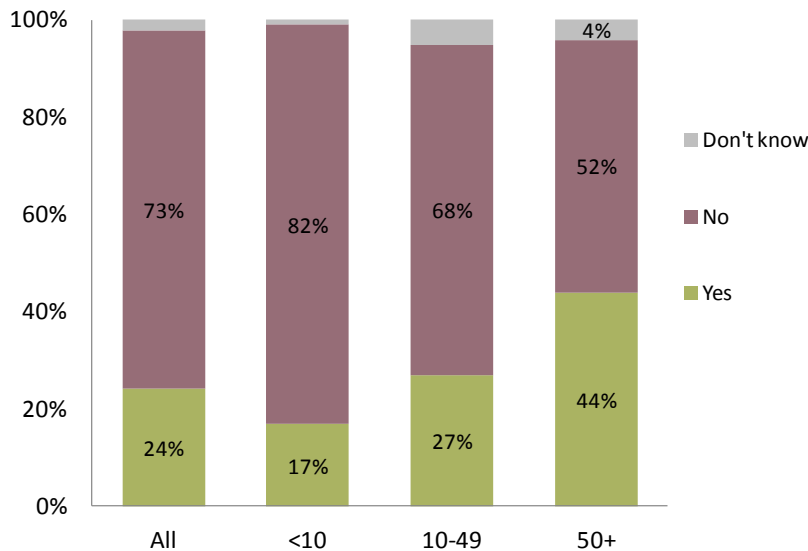
Among the core industry sectors, agriculture businesses were most likely to report needing a permit (33%).

4.4 Sources of information, advice and support

4.4.1 Contact with business support organisations

Respondents were asked whether they had ever been in contact with any business support organisations to discuss environmental issues, and overall 24% said that they had (see Figure 11). The largest organisations were most likely to have sought support (44% of companies with 50+ employees, compared to 17% of those with fewer than 10 employees and 27% of those with 10-49 employees).

Figure 11: Contact with business support organisations to discuss environmental issues



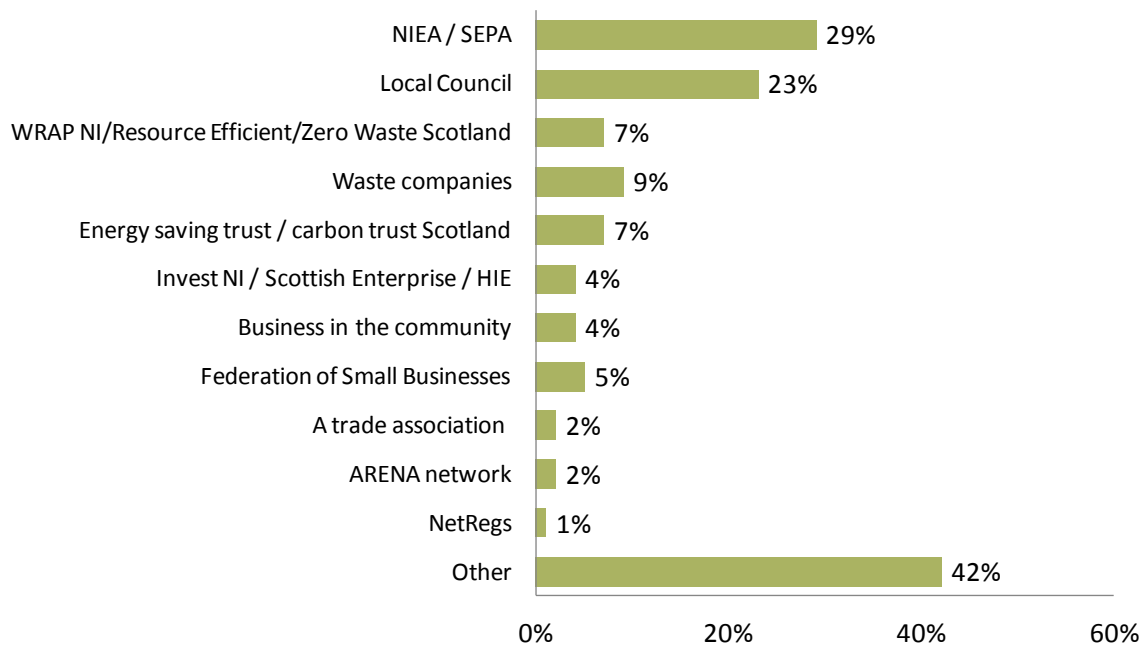
Base (all): 1,006

Among the core industry sectors, those from the agriculture sector (31%) and the hotels and restaurant sector (27%) were most likely to have contacted some kind of business support organisation, while transport businesses were the least likely to have done this (11%).

4.4.2 Business support organisations contacted

Those respondents who had sought support or advice were asked to specify which organisations they had contacted. The most commonly mentioned organisation by these respondents was NIEA/SEPA (29%), followed by the local council (23%). A large proportion of respondents (42%) also mentioned other support organisations not listed, although there was no consistent pattern to emerge in this data. Instead a wide range of specific organisations were listed. A full list has been provided separately.

Figure 12: Business support organisations contacted



Base (all who had contact with a business support organisation): 245

The following significant differences were observed in the sub-group analysis for this question:

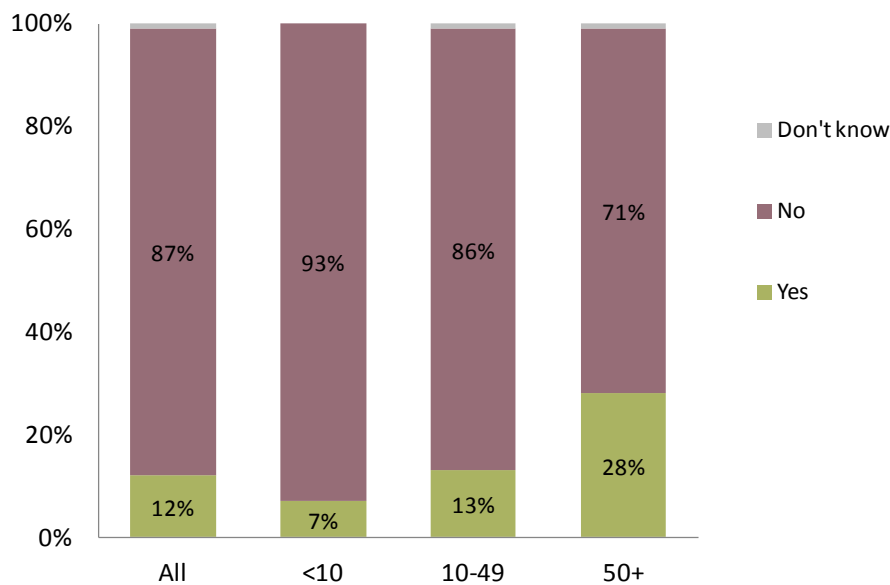
- The smallest and largest businesses were less likely than medium sized businesses to have contacted their local council (34% of those with 10-49 employees, compared to 16% of those with fewer than 10 and 20% of those with more than 50 employees)
- The largest Scottish organisations were more likely to have contacted Resource Efficient Scotland / Zero Waste Scotland than the medium sized and smaller organisations (28% of those with 50+ employees, v 2% of <10 and 4% of 10-49).

4.5 Awareness and use of NetRegs

4.5.1 Awareness of NetRegs

A number of questions were asked specifically about the NetRegs website. Firstly, respondents were asked whether they had heard of the NetRegs website. As shown in Figure 13, the majority (87%) were not aware of NetRegs, although awareness was higher among the larger organisations (28% had heard of it, compared to only 7% among the smallest companies).

Figure 13: Whether respondents had heard of the NetRegs website



Base (all): 1,006

Among the core industry sectors, respondents from construction businesses were most likely to say they had heard of NetRegs (16%). Those from the hotels and restaurants sector (6%) and healthcare sector (7%) were least likely to be aware of NetRegs.

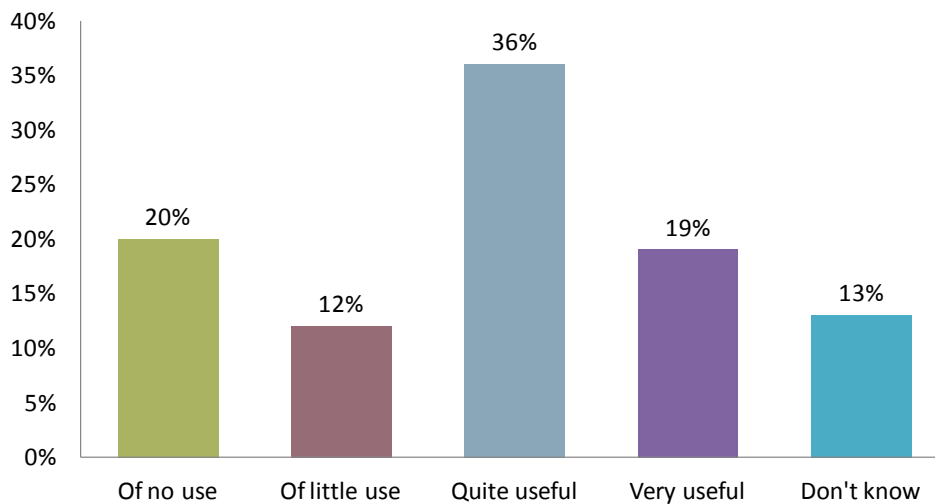
4.5.2 Perceived usefulness of NetRegs

Those who had not heard of NetRegs were given the following description:

“The NetRegs site provides free, plain English guidance to help small and medium sized businesses comply with their environmental responsibilities”.

These unaware respondents were then asked how useful their organisation would find this service. As shown in Figure 14, the majority (56%) thought this would be quite or very useful. Thirty one per cent thought it would be of little or no use, while 13% said they didn't know.

Figure 14: How useful respondents think NetRegs would be



Base (all not aware of NetRegs): 937

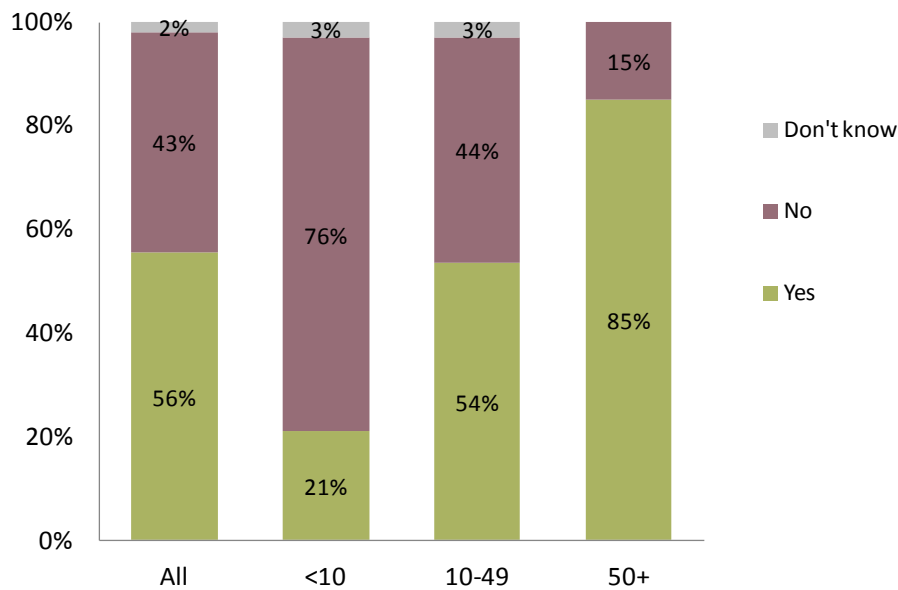
There was a clear difference in perceptions of how useful NetRegs would be based on the size of the business, with just 50% of the smallest organisations saying they thought it would be quite or very useful – significantly lower than the proportions observed in the medium sized (62%) and largest (68%) organisations.

Perceptions also varied among respondents from the core industry sectors, with those in hotels/restaurants (62%), construction (62%) and healthcare (57%), being most likely to think NetRegs would be quite or very useful, and those in transport (44%) and agriculture (47%) being least positive about the perceived usefulness of the service.

4.5.3 Use of NetRegs

Those who had heard of NetRegs were asked if they had ever used the website, and just over half (56%) said that they had done so. This equates to 7% of the total sample of 1006 respondents who had used the NetRegs website. Use was highest among the largest organisations, although there are some small base sizes for this question which should be borne in mind when interpreting the findings (see Figure 15).

Figure 15: Whether respondents had used the NetRegs website

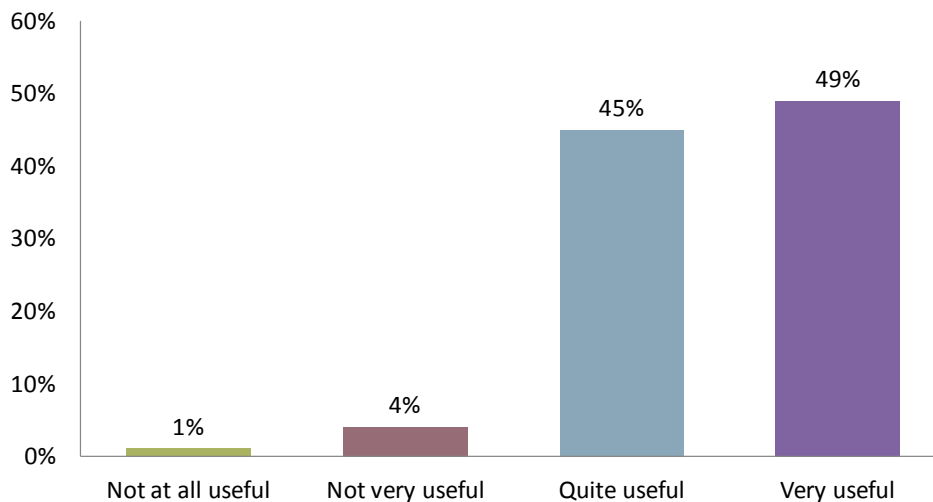


Base (all who had heard of NetRegs): 124

4.5.4 Ratings of NetRegs

Respondents who had used the NetRegs website were also asked how useful they found the website, and very positive feedback was received: 94% reported it was very or quite useful. Caution should be exercised in the interpretation of these findings due to the very small base size (see Figure 16).

Figure 16: How useful respondents find the NetRegs website



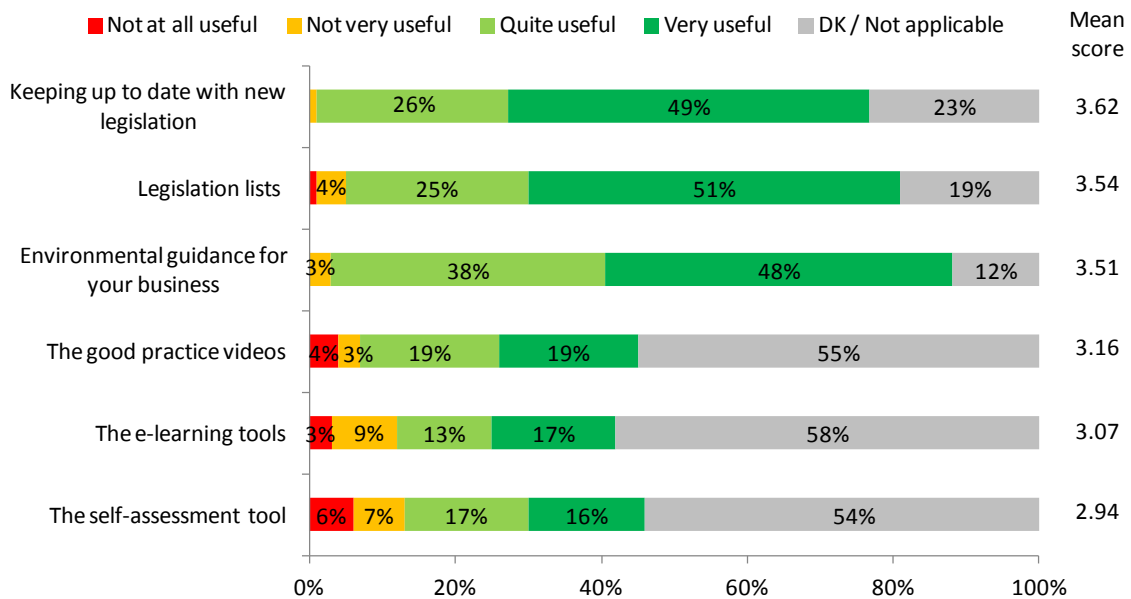
Base (all who had used NetRegs): 69

Those who had used the NetRegs website were also asked to rate various aspects of the content of the website in terms of their usefulness. Please note that these findings should be treated as indicative only due to the very small base sizes involved (only 69 respondents had used the website).

As shown in Figure 17, the highest ratings were given for keeping up to date with new legislation, legislation lists, and environmental guidance. The good practice videos, e-learning tools and

self-assessment tool were given slightly lower ratings by those who had used them, although they were also not used by many respondents – the majority answered ‘don’t know / not applicable’.

Figure 17: Usefulness of aspects of NetRegs



Base (all who had used NetRegs): 69

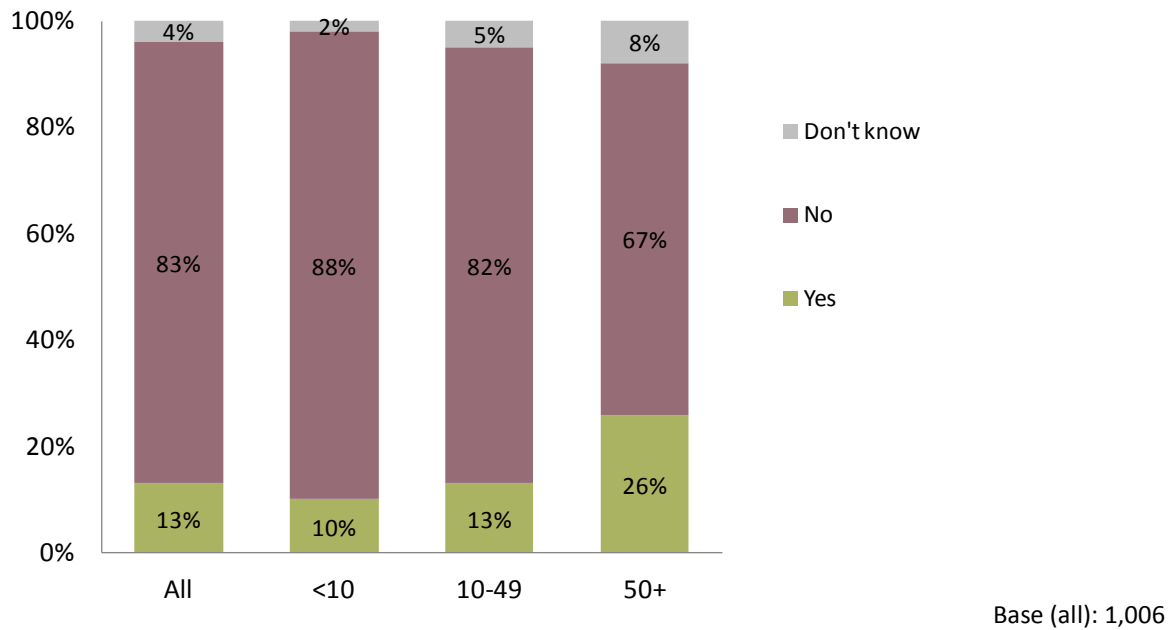
Please note that base sizes were too small to conduct meaningful sub-group analysis for the questions on ratings of NetRegs.

4.6 Current and future support from SEPA

4.6.1 Support received from SEPA/NIEA

When respondents were asked whether they had ever received support from SEPA/NIEA to help them deal with environmental issues, 13% said that they had (see Figure 18). Those from the largest organisations were most likely to report receiving such support (26% of those with 50+ employees, compared to 10% of those with fewer than 10 employees and 13% of those with 10-49 employees).

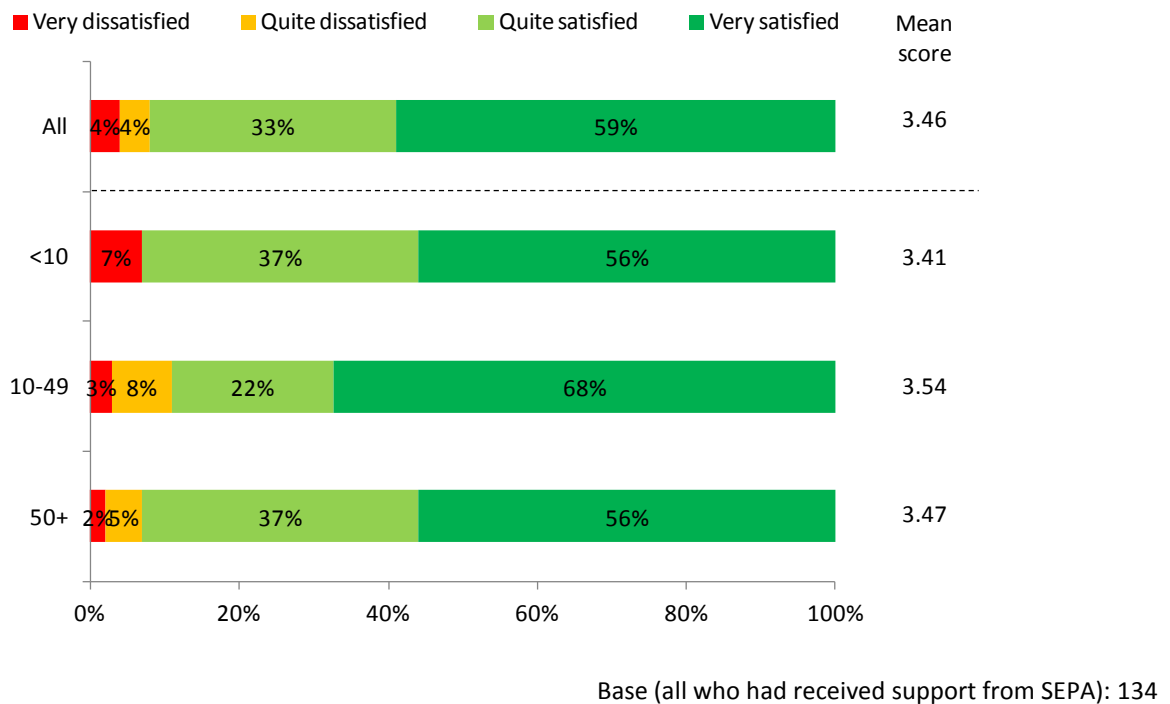
Figure 18: Whether respondents had received support from SEPA/NIEA



In terms of business sector, respondents within the agriculture industry were the most likely to report that they have received support from SEPA/NIEA (23%), while those working within the healthcare, hotels and restaurants and transport sectors were the least likely (all 8%).

Those who had received support were asked how satisfied they were with the support provided. As shown in Figure 19, high ratings were given – 92% reported that they were very or quite satisfied with SEPA/NIEA’s support. Data is presented by business size although it should be noted that base sizes are very small (<10 = 54; 10-49 = 37; 50+ = 43).

Figure 19: Satisfaction with support provided by SEPA/NIEA

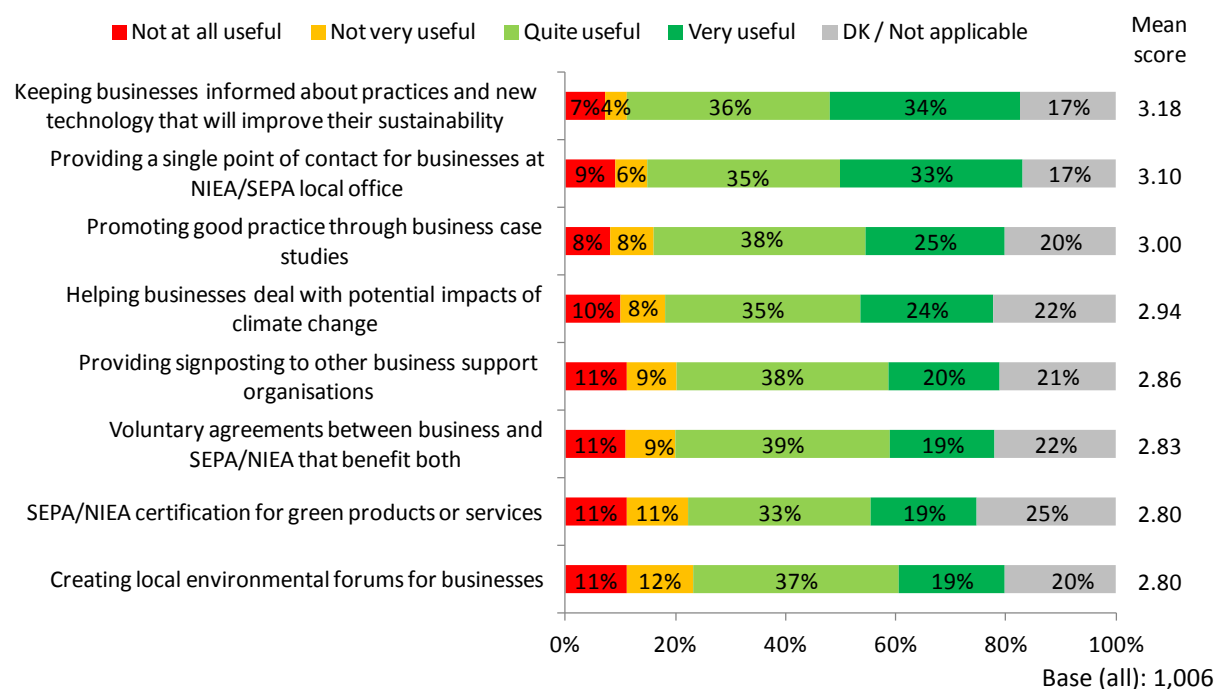


4.6.2 Future support from SEPA/NIEA

SEPA and NIEA was interested in gauging levels of support for various proposed actions that are under consideration to help businesses generate opportunities from environmental improvements. The survey gave a list of possible actions and asked respondents how useful they would find these. As shown in Figure 20, there was broad support for all of the proposed actions, with only very small proportions saying they thought these would be not very or not at all useful.

The most popular suggestions were keeping businesses informed about practices and new technology that will improve their sustainability (with a mean score 3.18 out of 4), providing a single point of contact at a SEPA/NIEA local office (3.10) and promoting good practice through business case studies (3.00). All other suggestions received only marginally less support; between 52% and 59% of respondents stated each would be very or quite useful.

Figure 20: How useful SEPA/NIEA’s proposed actions would be



Significant differences emerged in responses to this question by business size, with the largest organisations being most positive about the proposed actions and the smallest organisations being least positive (see Table 8).

Table 8: Proportion rating suggestions as very/quite useful by business size

Proposed actions to help generate business opportunities from environmental improvements	<10	10-49	50+
Keeping businesses informed about practices and new technology that will improve their sustainability	65%	76%	80%
Providing a single point of contact for businesses at SEPA / NIEA local office	63%	72%	79%
Promoting good practice through business case studies	57%	66%	80%
Helping businesses deal with potential impacts of climate change	55%	61%	69%
Providing signposting to other business support organisations	52%	62%	70%
SEPA / NIEA certification for green products or services	47%	57%	61%
Voluntary agreements between business and SEPA / NIEA that benefit both	52%	65%	64%
Creating local environmental forums for businesses	51%	59%	68%
Base	543	295	168

Respondents were asked whether there were any other actions that SEPA/NIEA could take to help them generate business opportunities from environmental improvements, and overall 12% said yes. Of the 118 respondents making suggestions, the most common types of response related to:

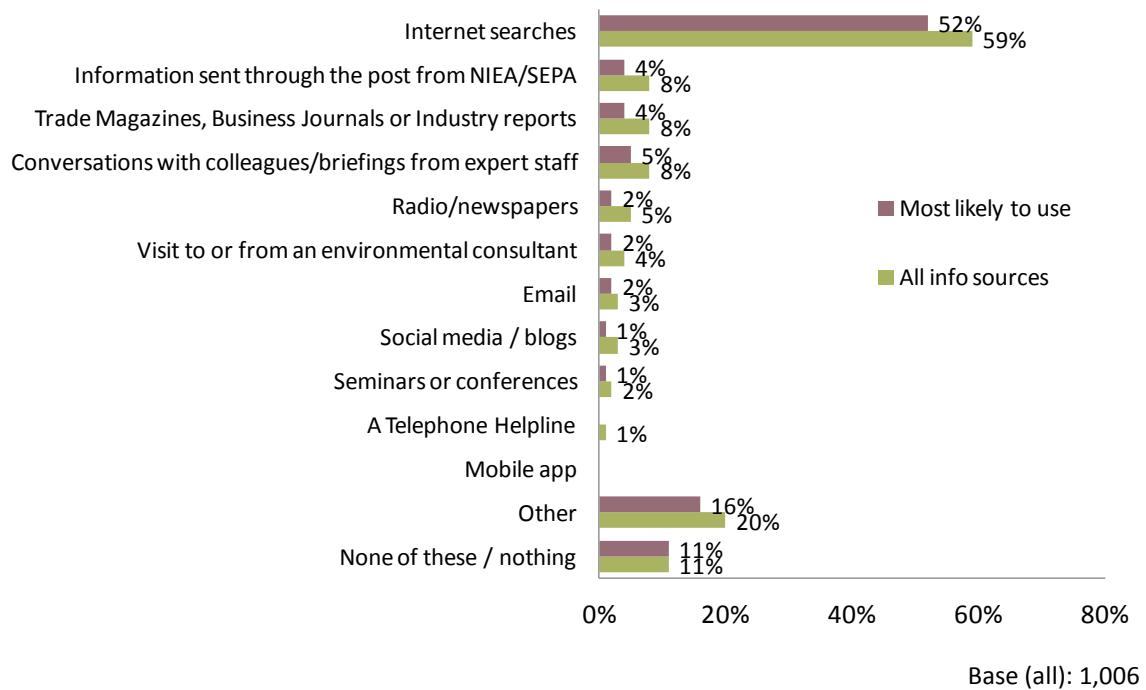
- More regular contact / updates with changes / more contact in general (mentioned by 17 respondents)
- Requests for information on specific topics (14)
- Help to save money / source funds (12)
- Be more positive in advice, not just punitive (8)
- Promote environmental issues/make clients aware of responsibilities (7).

4.7 Information sources

Finally, the survey focused on information sources that respondents were likely to use to find out about environmental issues relating to their business. Respondents were asked which sources they would ever use (and could select as many as they wanted) and then which **one** of these they would be most likely to use.

As shown in Figure 21, the most commonly mentioned information source was internet searches – in total 59% identified the internet as something they would use, and 52% said this would be the one source they would be most likely to use. Very few respondents mentioned other sources of information, and indeed a small proportion (11%) stated they would not use any information sources at all.

Figure 21: Information sources (all sources, and those most likely to use)



In total, 203 respondents reported that they would be likely to use ‘other’ information sources. The most commonly mentioned were the local council (mentioned by 61 respondents), SEPA/NIEA/the Environment Agency (18), and a government department (15 respondents).

There were very few sub-group differences in response to these questions, with the exception of:

- The largest organisations were most likely to mention conversations with colleagues / briefings from expert staff (8% 50+ v 3% <10)
- The largest organisations were also the least likely to say they would use none of these information sources (3% 50+, v 14% <10).

5. Summary and Conclusions

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

The majority of businesses that participated in the research reported that their organisation undertakes activities that could be harmful to the environment (76%). However, for many awareness of such activities was not top of mind - only 40% were able to state without prompting any activities that their company did which could potentially be environmentally damaging. It is encouraging, however, that the vast majority of SME businesses in Scotland and Northern Ireland (92%) have taken at least some action to reduce harm to the environment. The most common measures implemented related to dealing with waste; either recycling waste or cutting down on waste.

In total, 17% of respondents said their company had an Environmental Management System, such as an ISO 14001, BS 8555 or Green Ticks standard, while 36% of those who did not have an EMS reported having an environmental policy. Combining these data indicates that just under half (47%) of the sample overall had either an EMS or an environmental policy in place.

The most common reason given for taking steps to improve environmental performance was improving the business's reputation and green credentials, whilst the most frequently reported benefits of taking these steps included reduced operating costs and reduced risk of prosecution or fines.

Given that many businesses are motivated to take environmental harm reduction measures in order to reduce the risk of prosecution, it is also important to understand how aware SME businesses are of relevant environmental legislation. When prompted with a list of regulations and legislation, the majority (87%) recognised at least one, with awareness highest for Food Waste Regulations (62%) and the Duty of Care Regulations (60%). In Northern Ireland awareness was also particularly high for Hazardous Waste Regulations (70% of NI sample were aware).

As well as investigating the actions that businesses had taken to reduce environmental harm, the research also explored where businesses in Scotland and Northern Ireland seek advice and support on such issues. Almost one quarter of respondents reported that their business had sought support to ensure that they comply with legislation and operate in an environmentally friendly way, most commonly from SEPA (Scotland) or their local council. The survey also explored information sources that respondents were likely to use to find out about environmental issues relating to their business. The most commonly mentioned information source was internet searches. Any action that SEPA/NIEA can take to ensure a good web presence when searching for relevant terms will help organisations find them as a source of advice.

When respondents were asked directly whether they had ever received support from SEPA/NIEA to help them deal with environmental issues, 13% said that they had. Ratings of the support received were generally high, with 92% reporting that they were very or quite satisfied. The survey did not explore awareness of SEPA/NIEA or what the organisation does; however, the fact that only one in four respondents had sought help from SEPA/NIEA suggests that promotion of the advice available may help raise awareness of SEPA/NIEA's services.

However, when asked specifically about the NetRegs website, only a minority of respondents (12%) reported that they were aware of it, while around half of these businesses had actually used it (7% of the total sample). The research therefore suggests that there is some considerable scope to raise awareness of the NetRegs website and the benefits it can offer businesses. Indeed, when those who

had not heard of NetRegs were given a description of the service and then asked how useful they would find it, over half (56%) thought the site would be quite or very useful. These findings suggest that lack of awareness is more of a barrier to uptake of the website than negative perceptions of the value of the site. Therefore, more widespread promotion of the NetRegs website is likely to lead to greater uptake.

5.2 Conclusions

SME business in Scotland and Northern Ireland are clearly motivated to ensure that they operate in a way that minimises any harmful impact on the environment. Almost all respondents reported that their business had implemented measures to reduce environmental harm, although motivations to do so were varied. They also understand the business benefits of implementing environmental protection measures, such as reducing operating costs, reducing the risk of prosecution and improved relations with customers. However, there were significant variances in findings by size of company, with larger organisations (with more than 50 employees) the most aware of potentially harmful activities and the relevant legislation, and the most likely to have taken steps to reduce their environmental impact. The smallest companies (those with less than 10 employees) tended to have lower levels of awareness, and were also less likely to perceive value in implementing or investing in measures to reduce environmental impact.

The research, therefore, suggests that the smaller SMEs require information and advice on how their operations could potentially harm the environment, and how they could minimise these harms. There is also a need, however, to persuade these organisations of the business benefits and opportunities that investment in such harm reduction measures could bring.

One method which could be used to raise awareness amongst all SME businesses is the NetRegs website. Indeed, the internet is the key source of information on environmental issues and NIEA/SEPA was the organisation most likely to have been contacted by those who have previously sought advice in this area (indicating a high level of trust and confidence in its advice). However, the NetRegs site itself is not being widely utilised by SME companies, despite the fact that it is very well regarded amongst those who have used it. Awareness seems to be the main barrier preventing uptake, rather than a lack of relevance or perceived usefulness; the majority of those who had not used the site thought that it would be something that could be useful to their business.

The findings therefore provide clear evidence of the potential value of NetRegs, as well as the need for it, especially amongst smaller SMEs. Focused promotion of the site, and regarding the value of engagement in environmental harm reduction measures, on smaller SMEs will drive visits to the site and potentially lead to improved environmental performance within this sector.

Appendix 1: Survey Questionnaire

Introduction

Good morning/afternoon/evening, I am _____ from Progressive, an independent market research company who are carrying out a government survey funded by the [route from sample] Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) / Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA).

This is an important study to find out what environmental issues are faced by UK businesses, and also how aware people are of the sources of help available.

This is a confidential survey which takes no more than 10 minutes to complete. Everyone who takes part will be entered into a prize draw to win £200. Would it be OK to ask you a few brief questions to ascertain your views on the subject?

SQ1. We're interested in speaking to the person in the business who deals with environmental issues and decisions, such as waste management or water and energy use in the business. Are you responsible for this kind of decision making in your business?

	CODE
Yes	1
No	2

IF YES, CONTINUE. IF NO, ASK TO SPEAK TO THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE AND/OR ARRANGE CALL-BACK.

SQ2. Calls may be recorded for quality control purposes. Are you happy with that?

	CODE
Yes	1
No	2

IF NO (SQ2=2), ARRANGE CALL-BACK

Q1a) What, if any, practical measures has your organisation ever introduced aimed at preventing or reducing harm to the environment? [Do not read out, multicode]

Q1b) Has your organisation ever undertaken any of the following activities? [mask any already mentioned at Q1a] [Read out, multicode]

	Q1a (spont)	Q1b (prompt)
Assessed the impact your business has on the environment	1	1
Carried out a programme of environmental improvements	2	2
Made someone in the company responsible for environmental matters	3	3
Made any energy efficiency or water reduction improvements	4	4
Cut down your business waste	5	5
Recycled your business waste	6	6
Reduced transport emissions	7	7

Reduced transport costs	8	8
Reduced your use of raw materials	9	9
Other environmental activity (specify)	10	10
None of these / nothing	11	11

ASK IF NEVER TAKEN ANY ACTIVITIES (Q1a=11 and Q1b=11)

Q1c. What would you say has prevented you from undertaking any of these measures to reduce harm to the environment? [Do not read out, multicode]

	CODE
It is too expensive / cost issues	1
Don't have time to think about it / it is not a priority for the business	2
Don't know what actions to take	3
Have never thought about it	4
Other (specify)	5
Don't know	6

ASK ALL

Q2. Has your business set up an Environmental Management System such as an ISO 14001 [pronounced 'fourteen thousand and one'], BS 8555 [pronounced '8 triple 5'], or [route from sample] Green ticks [Scotland] / Green Dragon [Northern Ireland] standard?

	CODE
Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

ASK IF NO OR DK (Q2=2,3)

Q3. Does your business have an Environmental Policy in place?

	CODE
Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

ASK IF NO OR DK (Q3=2,3)

Q4. How useful do you feel an Environmental Management System or Environmental Policy would be to your business?

	CODE

Of no use	1
Of little use	2
Quite useful	3
Very useful	4
Don't know	5

ASK ALL

Q5. How likely are you to invest money in improving your environmental performance over the next 12 months?

	CODE
Very unlikely	1
Quite unlikely	2
Quite likely	3
Very likely	4
Don't know	5

ASK IF YES TO ANY OPTIONS @ Q1a/b, OR YES @ Q2 OR Q3

Q6. What prompted you to take steps to improve your environmental performance? [Do not read out, multicode]. Probe, anything else?

	CODE
Business support organisations (specify name of organisation)	1
Suggestions from within the business	2
Stakeholder / supply chain requests or pressures	3
Customer or client requests or pressures	4
TV news or programmes	5
Financial pressures	6
To keep ahead of the competition	7
To improve reputation / green credentials	8
Other (specify)	9
Don't know	10

Q7. As a result of taking steps to improve your environmental performance, has your business benefited from any of the following? [Read out, multicode] Probe – Anything else? Code under 'other'.

	CODE
Reduced operating costs	1

Increased sales and profitability	2
Improved relationships with customers/others	3
Reduced risk of prosecution or fines	4
A more motivated workforce	5
Other (specify)	6
None of these	7
Don't know	8

ASK ALL

Q8. Have you ever been in contact with any business support organisations to discuss environmental issues?

	CODE
Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

ASK IF YES (Q8=1)

Q8a. Which organisation(s) have you spoken to about environmental issues? [Do not read out, multicode]

Route from sample		CODE
ASK ALL	A trade association (specify)	1
ASK ALL	Federation of Small Businesses	2
ASK ALL	Business in the community	3
ASK ALL	NetRegs	4
ASK ALL	Local Council	5
ASK ALL	Waste companies	6
NI	WRAP Northern Ireland	7
NI	Invest NI	8
NI	NIEA	9
NI	ARENA network	10
NI	Energy saving trust / carbon trust	11
Scot	Resource Efficient Scotland / Zero Waste Scotland	12
Scot	Scottish Enterprise / HIE	13
Scot	SEPA	14

Scot	Energy saving trust / carbon trust Scotland	15
ASK ALL	Any other business organisation (specify)	16

Q9a) What activities, if any, does your organisation undertake which you think could be regarded as harmful to the environment? [Do not read out, multicode]

Q9b) Does your organisation undertake any of the following activities? [mask any already mentioned at Q9a] [Read out, multicode]

	Q9a (spont)	Q9b (prompt)
Store waste on site prior to removal	1	1
Use transport (for travel or deliveries)	2	2
Store chemicals, fuel or oils	3	3
Produce or use packaging	4	4
Use water pumped from lochs, rivers or boreholes	5	5
Emit smoke or fumes to air	6	6
Other (specify)	7	7
None of these / nothing	8	8

Q10. Have you heard of any of the following environmental regulations or legislation? [Read out, multicode]

Route from sample		CODE
ASK ALL	Food waste regulations	1
ASK ALL	Packaging Waste Regulations	2
ASK ALL	Duty of Care Regulations	3
ASK ALL	Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations (WEEE Regulations)	4
NI	Hazardous Waste Regulations	5
Scot	Zero Waste Regulations (segregation of recyclable waste)	6
Scot	Special Waste Regulations	7
ASK ALL	Any other environmental legislation that applies to your business (specify)	8
ASK ALL	None of these [do not read out]	9

Q11. Does your business need any Permit, Licence or Exemption from [route from sample] SEPA / NIEA to carry out its activities?

	CODE
Yes	1

No	2
Don't know	3

Q12. Have you heard of the NetRegs website?

	CODE
Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

ASK IF HEARD OF NETREGS (Q12=1)

Q13. Have you used the NetRegs website?

	CODE
Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

IF HAVE NOT HEARD / NOT USED / DK (Q12=2,3 OR Q13=2,3)

Q14. The NetRegs site provides free, plain English guidance to help small and medium sized businesses comply with their environmental responsibilities. How useful would your organisation find this service?

	CODE
Of no use	1
Of little use	2
Quite useful	3
Very useful	4
Don't know	5

IF HAVE USED NETREGS (Q13=1)

Q15. How useful do you find the NetRegs website?

	CODE
Not at all useful	1
Not very useful	2
Quite useful	3
Very useful	4

Q16. And how useful do you find the following features of the site?

	Not at all useful	Not very useful	Quite useful	Very useful	DK / Not applicable
Environmental guidance for your business	1	2	3	4	5
Legislation lists	1	2	3	4	5
Keeping up to date with new legislation	1	2	3	4	5
The e-learning tools	1	2	3	4	5
The self-assessment tool	1	2	3	4	5
The good practice videos	1	2	3	4	5

ASK ALL

Q17. Have you ever received support from [route from sample] NIEA / SEPA to help you deal with environmental issues?

	CODE
Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

ASK IF RECEIVED SUPPORT (Q17=1)

Q18. How satisfied are you with the support you received from [route from sample] NIEA / SEPA?

	CODE
Very dissatisfied	1
Quite dissatisfied	2
Quite satisfied	3
Very satisfied	4

ASK ALL

Q19. [Route from sample] NIEA / SEPA are considering a list of possible actions that could help businesses generate business opportunities from environmental improvements. How useful would you find each of the following actions?

	Not at all useful	Not very useful	Quite useful	Very useful	DK / Not applicable
Voluntary agreements between business and SEPA/NIEA that benefit both	1	2	3	4	5

Providing a single point of contact for businesses at NIEA/SEPA local office	1	2	3	4	5
SEPA/NIEA certification for green products or services	1	2	3	4	5
Promoting good practice through business case studies	1	2	3	4	5
Helping businesses deal with potential impacts of climate change	1	2	3	4	5
Providing signposting to other business support organisations	1	2	3	4	5
Creating local environmental forums for businesses	1	2	3	4	5
Keeping businesses informed about practices and new technology that will improve their sustainability	1	2	3	4	5

Q20. Are there any other actions [route from sample] SEPA/NIEA could take to help you generate business opportunities from environmental improvements?

	CODE
Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

ASK IF YES (Q20=1)

Q21. What other actions [route from sample] could SEPA/NIEA take to help you generate business opportunities from environmental improvements?

Q22a) Which sources of information, if any, are you likely to use to find out about environmental issues that relate to your business? [Do not read out, multicode]. Probe – anything else?

Q22b) [Routed from options selected at Q24a] And which one of these are you **most** likely to use to find out about environmental issues that relate to your business?

	Q22a – all	Q22b – most
Internet searches	1	1
Social media / blogs	2	2
Email	3	3
Mobile app	4	4
Trade Magazines, Business Journals or Industry reports	5	5

Radio/newspapers	6	6
A Telephone Helpline	7	7
Visit to or from an environmental consultant	8	8
Seminars or conferences	9	9
Information sent through the post from SEPA/NIEA	10	10
Conversations with colleagues, or briefings from expert staff	11	11
Other (specify)	12	12
None of these	13	13

Q23. The final few questions are just for classification purposes to help with our analysis. Roughly how many permanent employees does your business have (including both full and part time staff)? _____

Q24. What is your position in the company?

	Code
Owner/MD/Partner	1
Director/company secretary	2
Works/production/site/farm manager	3
Environmental manager/officer	4
Technical manager/officer (e.g. Health and safety, quality, contracts)	5
Office Manager/Personnel manager/Admin/Secretary/PA etc	6
Other (specify)	7

Q25. The NetRegs website provides a free monthly email update on environmental guidance. Would you be interested in signing up?

	CODE
Yes	1
No	2

IFYES (Q25=1)

Q26. May I confirm your contact name and email address? This information will not be shared with any third parties and will be stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Contact name _____

Email address _____

THANK AND CLOSE

Appendix 2: Technical Appendix

Quantitative

Methodology:

- The data was collected by CATI interviewing
- The target group for this research study was SMEs in Scotland and Northern Ireland
- The sampling frame used for this study was a sample database provided by Prospect360
- The target sample size was 1,000 and the final achieved sample size was 1,006. The reason for the difference between these two samples was standard sampling procedures allowing for slight overage
- Fieldwork was undertaken between 25th January and 25th February 2016.
- Respondents were selected using:
 - a stratified random sampling technique, whereby interviewers worked to specified quota controls on key sample criteria, and selected respondents randomly within these quotas
- An incentive of a £200 prize draw was used to encourage a positive response to the survey.
- In total, 27 interviewers worked on data collection.
- Each interviewer's work is validated as per the requirements of the international standard ISO 20252.
 - Validation was achieved by recording all interviews and listening to a minimum of 10% of the interviews for each interviewer working on the study. In addition, interviewers were constantly monitored by the Telephone Unit Manager to ensure quality was maintained throughout each interview.
- None of the work for this project was sub-contracted.
- All research projects undertaken by Progressive comply fully with the requirements of ISO 20252.

Data Processing and Analysis:

- Quota controls were used to guide sample selection for this study. This means that we cannot provide statistically precise margins of error or significance testing as the sampling type is non-probability. The margins of error outlined below should therefore be treated as indicative, based on an equivalent probability sample.
 - The overall sample size of 1,006 provides a dataset with an approximate margin of error of between $\pm 0.61\%$ and $\pm 3.09\%$, calculated at the 95% confidence level (market research industry standard).
- Our data processing department undertakes a number of quality checks on the data to ensure its validity and integrity.
 - For **CATI Questionnaires** these checks include:
 - All responses logged by the interviewers are checked for completeness and sense. Any errors or omissions detected at this stage are referred back to the field department, who are required to re-contact respondents to check and, if necessary, correct the data.
 - Data is entered into our analysis package, SNAP, and data is stored on CATI booths until imported and stored in our secure workfiles.
 - A computer edit of the data is carried out prior to analysis, involving both range and inter-field checks. Any further inconsistencies identified at this stage are investigated by reference back to the raw data on the questionnaire.
 - Where 'other' type questions are used, the responses to these are checked against the parent question for possible up-coding.
 - Responses to open-ended questions will normally be spell and sense checked. Where required these responses may be grouped using a code-frame which can be used in analysis.
 - Our analysis package is used and a programme set up with the aim of providing the client with useable and comprehensive data. Cross breaks to be imposed on the data are discussed with the client in order to ensure that all information needs are being met.