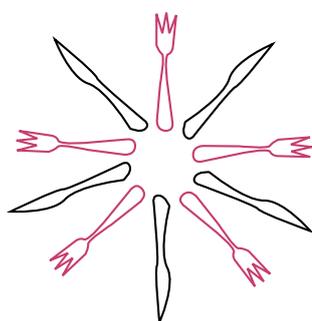
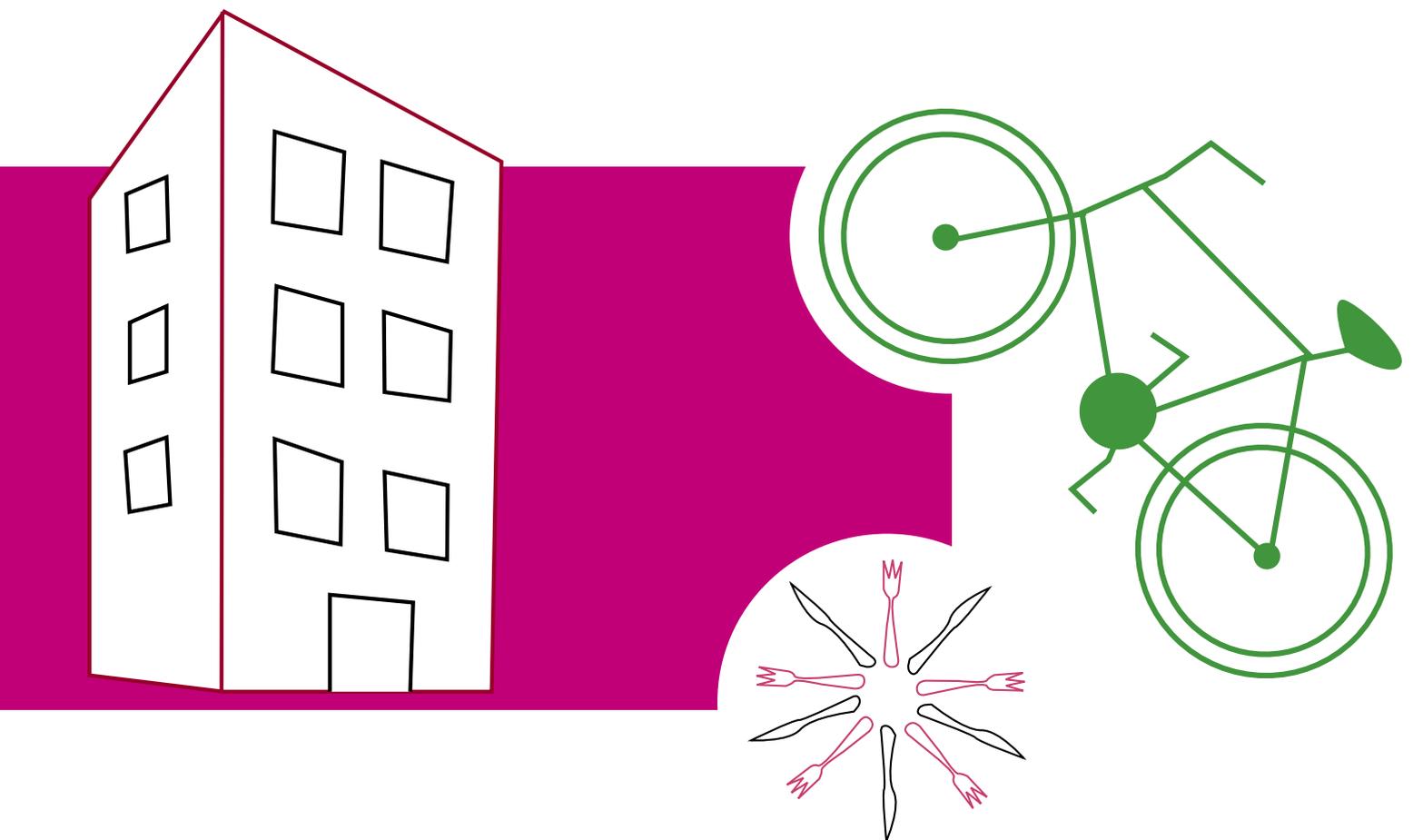


GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION 2005/06:107

Think twice!

– An action plan for sustainable household consumption



REGERINGSKANSLIET

Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Consumer Affairs
Sweden

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Summary

Through changes to everyday consumption Swedish consumers can contribute towards reducing injustices and environmental degradation, while at the same time improving their own personal health, as well as their personal finances. Therefore, working towards achieving more sustainable household consumption patterns is an important matter. Sustainable household consumption means a consumption of goods and services that meets human needs and provides increased quality of life, while at the same time minimising the negative impact of consumption on health and environment, to benefit fair and just development in Sweden and globally.

The Government's continuing measures towards sustainable household consumption will focus on enabling sustainable consumption, on strengthening the motivation for a behaviour change and on increasing consumer commitment to the issue of sustainable consumption. Future work will focus on the issues of how to eat, live and travel sustainably. Sweden should also continue to actively take part in ensuring that sustainable consumption issues are given priority at the international level, mainly within the UN but also within the EU and the OECD.

The action plan also aims to make the concept of sustainable consumption more comprehensible, by describing several of the measures that the Government has taken in order to promote a change in consumption patterns.

The Government's collected efforts towards sustainable consumption patterns will be monitored annually with the help of eight indicators for sustainable household consumption. An evaluation will be performed in 2009.

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1 An action plan for sustainable household consumption – scope and directions

Summary: It is important to work towards more sustainable household consumption patterns. The efforts towards sustainable household consumption will focus on people eating, living and travelling sustainably. Sweden will continue to work proactively towards sustainable consumption issues being given priority at the international level, mainly within the UN but also within the EU and the OECD.

Why do we need an action plan for sustainable household consumption?

All of us – within the public sector and the private sector as well as in our role as consumers – must contribute if we are to achieve sustainable development, both in Sweden and globally. Environmental issues have long been on the agenda and major changes have taken place with regard to the degree of environmental awareness of our consumption. In recent years the social consequences of our consumption have, to an increasing degree, come into focus, such as with regard to our health and global development. Through our consumption habits, however, we still continue to create unsustainable development, and in order for future generations to be able to meet their needs, changes must be made in several areas.

A change in consumption and production patterns, together with poverty reduction measures, have been pointed out by the Government as being among the most pressing related to the follow-up of the commitments made in connection with the 2002 UN Johannesburg summit. Despite the fact that the impact of any single household on the environment, economics and society is not of any major consequence, the total impact from all households will, however, be significant.

There are many studies showing how consumption in Sweden and in Europe affects development. A report from the European Environmental Agency (EEA Report 11/2005) on the consumption habits of European households and the environment, shows that household consumption in Europe has increased by almost one-third in the last decade. While economic growth is a prerequisite for sustainable development the EEA report shows that the environmental footprints of Swedish consumers – i.e. the degree of environmental impact that consumers have on the environment measured in area, hectares (ha) – is substantial (7.0 ha), even when compared to the European average (4.9).

Swedish consumption is not only a domestic concern but also affects the rest of the world. Seven per cent of the world population lives within the EU, but we are responsible for 17 % of total consumption. Swedes consume an increasing degree of imported goods, chiefly as a result of the increased use of imported primary produce within the food industry.

However, this also applies to a number of other products, such as electronics. The extraction of natural resources, as well as the production, processing and transport that we utilise, frequently take place outside of Sweden.

Swedish consumers to an increasing degree also affect developments in countries outside of Europe, through increased travel. There is a sharply increasing trend in the number of longer trips outside of the country. As tourists, Swedish consumers affect the social, environmental and economic development in the countries to which we travel, both through the trip itself and through the consumption patterns we have while in the country.

Life expectancy in Sweden has increased, but the number of years during which citizens can be expected to enjoy good health is not increasing at the same rate. Despite the largely favourable development regarding health there are some types of diseases that are on the increase. Among the most worrying of these is the increase in obesity and the ensuing complications of this condition. Overweight and obesity are lifestyle diseases that are closely related to our consumption patterns and where marked differences can be seen between different socioeconomic groups.

As for the utilisation of natural resources, e.g. to heat houses, technological development has brought with it several gains, including some with respect to energy consumption. This development has been favourable for certain high-income households, resulting in a strengthening of their personal finances. The increased consumption space has to a large degree been used for increased unsustainable consumption, which counteracts sustainable development. This complex of problems is usually called the rebound effect.

This action plan also details the efforts towards achieving sustainable household consumption, taking as its point of departure the Swedish Government sustainable development strategy, and the Swedish Government consumer policy strategy. The action plan is part of the Government's efforts towards developing a programme for sustainable consumption and production (SCP), in accordance with the commitments made at the Johannesburg summit. The next step is an action plan regarding SCP issues for the private sector and the public sector, which is intended to be launched at the end of 2006.

How can we think twice?

Through changes to everyday consumption Swedish consumers can contribute towards reducing injustices and environmental degradation, while at the same time improving their own personal health, as well as their personal finances. Therefore, working towards achieving more sustainable household consumption habits is an important matter for the Swedish Government. In order to obtain a change in consumption patterns radical measures must be taken, such as changing consumer habits and level of demand. One fundamental problem is that the price of goods and services generally does not reflect the costs to society that a product generates. The costs of 'negative external effects', i.e. effects

such as environmental degradation, noise and congestion, are rarely internalised in the price. This sends the wrong signals to consumers regarding the actual price of the product and those who lose out are, in most cases, society and the environment, which have to bear the costs. Within several areas of politics the government is now employing various economic control instruments in order to achieve sustainable consumption patterns, such as within the fields of consumer, transportation, energy and fiscal policies.

Sustainable development in Sweden is intimately connected with sustainable development in the rest of the world. Our consumption patterns and our line of policy affect others and at the same time we are affected by theirs. Consequently it is important that Sweden continue to take an active part in the international efforts regarding sustainable consumption patterns, primarily within the UN but also within the EU and the OECD, through the exchange of experience and knowledge. Within the framework of the UN's follow-up of the Johannesburg declaration Sweden has taken the lead of a Task Force on sustainable lifestyles, one of the so called Marrakech Task Forces. Members of the Task Force include Senegal, Argentina, Italy and United Kingdom, UNEP and a number of NGOs as well as research institutes. Sweden will also host the third international expert meeting on the 10-year framework of programmes for sustainable consumption and production in 2007.

What is sustainable consumption?

Sustainable household consumption means a consumption of goods and services that meets human needs and provides increased quality of life while at the same time minimising the negative impact of consumption on health and environment, to benefit fair and just global development. Sustainable consumption could also spur economic growth. The vision for the Government's efforts is to make household consumption sustainable.

The three dimensions of sustainability – environmental, economic and social – are not always entirely compatible. An action or a measure that is beneficial to the environment may not necessarily be socioeconomically effective or positive with respect to a globally fair and just development. Therefore it is of key importance to take all three dimensions into consideration in the formation and development of policies and measures.

Traditional economic research usually equates consumption with the purchase of goods or services, a perspective that gives a limited picture of consumption. Today's research instead frequently views consumption as a process involving four steps: purchase, adjustment, utilisation and consumption. In the research anthology 'Consumers and Power' – Utilising and Maintaining Resources (eds. Ellegård and Sturesson, 2002) the concepts of 'consumer' and 'consumption' have been analysed by different researchers. Consumption originates in a desire to meet basic human needs such as eating and sleeping, but has developed over time and has now also come to include choice of lifestyle. Many researchers claim that consumption has an existential function, in that it is through

our consumption that we tell the world who we are. Consumption has come to be a way of expressing socioeconomic group membership, status, etc.

The proportion of the total Swedish household consumption made up by the consumption of goods is decreasing in favour of service consumption, such as restaurant visits, taxi rides and culture. A substantial part of Swedish growth takes place within the service sector, which today stands for approximately 75 % of the total Swedish GDP. This does not mean, however, that the overall consumption of goods is decreasing. An increase in service consumption could prove to have positive effects on the environment, as energy intensity and the degree of utilisation of natural resources for these types of products often tend to be low.

Eating, living and travelling – the focus areas of the action plan

This action plan focuses on how to eat, live and travel sustainably, that is to say, on food, housing and transportation. These three areas of consumption are responsible for approximately half of all the negative strain on health, society and environment, while simultaneously, Swedish households spend slightly more than half of their disposable income after taxes on these areas.

Consumption is dependent on production and vice-versa. Consumption and production are frequently referred to as a single concept; sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns. It might be difficult to distinguish between which impact is derived from consumption or production patterns. This action plan has the consumer perspective as its point of departure and focuses on household consumption. Production patterns will be further developed in a future action plan, together with private sector and public sector consumption.

2 How can we break the trend towards unsustainable consumption?

Summary: The Government's continuing measures towards sustainable household consumption will focus on enabling sustainable consumption, on strengthening the motivation for a behaviour change and on increasing consumer commitment to the issue of sustainable consumption. Increased cooperation between different stakeholders is necessary in order to achieve sustainable household consumption.

Working towards achieving more sustainable consumption patterns among Swedish households is an important task. In order to achieve this, consumers must change their behaviour. A report from the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (Naturvårdsverket, 5226, July 2002) provides an overview of knowledge on consumption patterns and environmental behaviour according to relevant research. Our

consumption patterns are integrated with, and develop in accordance with, the infrastructural, technical, cultural, historical, geographical and socioeconomic conditions that apply in the society in which we live. They form and change constantly in interaction with politics, the surrounding world as well as with public and personal finances. Our consumer choices are not always completely unbiased, but are also formed by the conditions that the surroundings offer, such as our financial resources, the location of jobs and grocery shops, the opportunities for using public transportation, our health, proximity to a waste disposal site or whether it is socially acceptable to choose an environmentally adapted lifestyle. Certain groups, such as the disabled, those with limited financial resources and the elderly, have specific needs that to a large extent affect their behaviour.

An analysis of the impact of certain household types on the environment shows that households containing high income earners and co-habitants with or without children are those that are responsible for the most substantial environmental impact, when measured in the form of carbon dioxide emissions. Single-family dwellings also create a bigger strain on the environment than do tenant households.

Substantial parts of our everyday consumption are made up of habitual actions. We perform such actions without evaluating all possible consequences of our choice or all possible alternative options. Habits are formed, among other things, to facilitate everyday living and are often hard to break.

One widespread view is that in order to establish a behaviour change, consumers' attitudes and values must also be changed. Research shows, however, that positive attitudes towards sustainable development are not always sufficient to accomplish a change. A change requires a combination of measures aimed at removing obstacles, in order to create opportunities and measures for creating incentives, as well as steps intended to create a commitment in these issues.

Enable, motivate and commit for sustainable consumption

The Government's ambition for its future efforts is to enable consumers to consume sustainable and, further, to strengthen their motivation to change their behaviour and increase their commitment to the issue of sustainable consumption. This is best done by employing a mix of control instruments and tools. Control instruments and tools can be divided into three different groups: economic (taxes, charges and grants), administrative (acts and ordinances) and informative (labelling and providing information about the impact of different products on the environment, on society and on humans). Different control instruments and tools complement each other. While control instruments have a management function, tools assist in a decision process. Education and information can contribute to making the implementation of various control instruments effective. Education, information and various forms of dialogues might, for example, form the basis for the introduction of an economic control instrument, or serve to increase the knowledge of the

fact that economic control instruments exist and how to best employ them. Skr. 2005/06:107

Cooperation between various actors in society is important for promoting sustainable development and also to obtain positive effects of measures that have already been implemented. In order to achieve better collaboration we need a higher degree of cooperation with public authorities, the private sector, NGOs, trade associations, etc.

2.1 Enabling sustainable consumption

In order to enable sustainable consumption, administrative and communicative control instruments might be used to provide consumers with knowledge and opportunities based on which they can act.

As for creating opportunities, this requires different actors to take on responsibility. In particular this applies to the Riksdag (Swedish Parliament), the Government, municipalities, county councils, producers and retailers. The Riksdag and the Government create opportunities by employing administrative control instruments and tools, such as acts and ordinances. The authorities also play an important role, e.g. by providing objective information.

Municipalities and county councils have a central function with regard to community planning, such as when it comes to the provision of public transportation and waste management. These may also set a good example, disseminate positive experiences, prioritise consumer affairs assistance, integrate sustainable consumption into all relevant decisions, as well as making basic requirements on sustainability when contributing towards projects and organisations. The municipal consumer advisers and energy advisers, together with the Agenda 21 coordinators, also play an important role regarding dissemination of information and the forwarding of knowledge. Elementary schools, high schools, universities, colleges and the adult education system all play an important role as knowledge builders and providers.

The private sector is also responsible for ensuring that product quality and design create a minimal negative influence on personal health and on the environment, i.e. providing a sustainable product range and utilising sustainable production methods. Producers are also responsible for managing the waste generated by certain products.

2.1.1 Measures

In order to enable sustainable consumption the Government intends to further develop and work on the following measures.

- **Increased organic production and public consumption of organic labelled food**

In order to stimulate a positive development of the market for organic labelled food the Government considers the consumption of certified organic food within the public sector to be too low and that it needs to be

increased. The aim should be to make the consumption of organic labelled food amount to 25 % of the total public consumption of food. This might result in a long-term broadening of the product range and lead to improved access to organic food for all consumers. The Government communication has further determined that the certified organic production of meat, among other things, should be significantly increased.

- **Cooperation regarding information**

Objective information directed at consumers is important for enabling sustainable consumption. The Swedish Consumer Agency has the overall objective of encouraging households to adopt sustainable consumption patterns. Several other authorities also supply information on this issue.

In order to render the information more effective and more facilitating for consumers, the Swedish Consumer Agency will be appointed a coordinating and uniting function with regard to public authority information on sustainable consumption targeted at consumers. This means that the Swedish Consumer Agency should work towards a coordination of measures and general messages. The information should also be accessible to everyone. Some examples of authorities concerned are the National Food Administration, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and the Swedish Road Administration. The trade sector, along with other organisations, should be invited to take part in these communicative efforts.

- **Community planning**

Further government efforts towards community planning will, among other things, take the consumer perspective into consideration, with the aim to create improved opportunities for sustainable consumption. A government inquiry on this matter has recently been delivered that addresses issues such as the establishment of external shopping malls and the possibilities for placing requirements on estate owners to establish waste sorting facilities. A proposition will be delivered to the Riksdag in 2007.

The Swedish Consumer Agency will play a role in supporting municipalities in their work on community planning, in order to improve their opportunities for including a clear consumer perspective into their planning, with respect to accessibility, for example. Key parts of this process should include developing methods for learning among the actors concerned, increasing the knowledge of municipalities regarding consumer behaviour and needs and further, to stimulate inter-municipal cooperation on such matters. This process should be carried out in consultation with among others the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, the Swedish Competition Authority and the Municipalities and County Councils of Sweden, among others.

- **Sustainable urban development**

In the ongoing Government efforts towards sustainable urban development, consumer issues are addressed. In 2006 a proposal for a

national policy on sustainable urban development will be delivered in the form of a departmental memorandum by the Ministry of Sustainable Development.

- **More energy-efficient housing**

With the objective of improving, for instance, the opportunities for households to live sustainably, it is the Government's assessment that the present requirements regarding energy conservation in connection with the construction of new multi-family dwellings should be sharpened and, further, that requirements on energy-efficiency should be made in connection with major construction work in residential housing. The Government intends to assign the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning the task of providing regulations on this issue, taking cost-efficiency aspects into consideration.

- **The role of the private sector**

In order to promote a sustainable product range as well as sustainable production methods, the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth (Nutek) has, since the middle of the 1990s, by order of the Swedish Government, carried out measures intended at stimulating operational and product development from a sustainability perspective. This has been done by, for example, assisting small and medium-sized businesses in their efforts towards an environmental adaptation of their products and services, and further to assist in the environmental adaptation of their production process. In June 2005 the Swedish Environmental Technology Council (SWENTEC) was established and is now in the process of being built up. The function of the Council is, among other things, to coordinate the measures that are implemented in order to promote the development and market introduction of environmental technology, and further to strengthen companies' business opportunities within the environmental field, for domestically sold products as well as for exports.

- **Swedish and EU agricultural policy measures**

The EU agricultural policy affects both the range and prices of food and thus influences our eating habits. In connection with the reform of the EU market regulations on fruit and vegetables in 2007, Sweden will work proactively towards abolishing all price-increasing support for such products.

- **Standardisation**

The importance of taking environmental aspects into consideration for all types of standards is emphasised by, among others, the European Commission and the standardisation organisations in Sweden and in Europe. Work is underway regarding the creation of a governing standard for social and environmental responsibility (ISO 26000 Social Responsibility, SR). The Government will continue to work towards ensuring that the sustainability perspective is taken into consideration in the development of consumer product standards, such as through support to ISO Social Responsibility.

The Swedish Consumers' Association has received increased financial support towards strengthening consumer representation in the standardisation process.

- **Labelling**

Labelling constitutes an important tool regarding sustainable consumption, as it provides the consumer with easily accessible information at the time of purchase and also communicates a substantial amount of information easily. This is true for informative labelling, such as content declarations, and also for added value labelling. The Government intends to continue to provide support to eco-labels such as the Nordic Swan (Svanen) and the EU eco-label the flower and also to the ethical Fairtrade label.

The Swedish Consumer Agency will also be given the task of providing information regarding various types of ethical and social labelling.

- **Education on sustainable development and sustainable consumption**

Knowledge is a key factor for achieving sustainable development. Therefore it is necessary for sustainable development to permeate and be an integral part of education at all levels, from pre-school and the compulsory school to the adult education system, colleges and universities. An example of this is the regulation introduced in the Higher Education Act (1992:1434) that states that universities and colleges should work towards making sustainable development an integral part of their work. The UN General Assembly has declared the period 2005–2014 to be the decade for education on sustainable development. Sweden has taken an active role in the international efforts towards providing education on sustainable development. Moreover, consumer knowledge is of key importance for being able to assimilate information and make conscious choices based on it.

As for issues relating to sustainable household consumption, these are part of the school subjects 'home economics' and 'consumer affairs', but they may also be addressed within the framework of other subjects. In order to further facilitate the integration of sustainable consumption into different school subjects, the Swedish Consumer Agency will receive the task of developing scholastic educational materials focusing on these issues, among others.

2.2 Motivating sustainable consumption

In order to promote a behavioural change, economic control instruments and sometimes information may be used to strengthen consumers' motivation to make a change. The motivation may be strengthened by increasing consumer costs for unsustainable behaviour, for example by adding an environmental tax on air travel (see p.26) or by reducing the costs for sustainable behaviour, for example a tax reduction on environmental improvements in single-family dwellings (see p.21). An

incentive can also be created through the introduction of a financial grant, such as investment support for conversion from direct electric heating (see p.21). With subsidies and tax reductions, it is society that bears the costs of the behaviour change, while adding a tax on unsustainable activity means that the polluter pays.

It is primarily the Riksdag and the Government that have the opportunity to create motives for a change, through employing economic instruments of control. However, the private sector may also play an important part in creating motivation, such as by offering a lower interest rate on mortgages taken in connection with the purchase of a green car, which some banks do. The private sector also has the possibility of encouraging sustainable consumption by displaying goods in stores in a certain way. A recent study from the Swedish Consumer Agency shows that for everyday commodities environmental information is provided, along with certain ethical information that may act as an incentive. This is particularly true for shelf labelling, but brochures and signs are important, too.

2.2.1 Measures

The Government intends to work further on the following measures in particular, in order to contribute to increasing consumer motivation for sustainable consumption.

- **More efficient economic control instruments within the environment sector**

Economic control instruments within the environment sector can contribute to increasing consumer motivation to act sustainably. In Sweden a number of economic control instruments are used within the environment sector. The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and The Swedish Energy Agency have, together with the Swedish National Institute of Economic Research and The Swedish Tax Authority, been assigned the task of conducting a comprehensive analysis of today's economic control instrument within the environment sector, with the view to provide an overview of how existing control instruments interact and how efficient they are. The task, including a review of taxes, fees and direct subsidies, should be delivered in October 2006. In light of this evaluation an inquiry will be initiated, which when necessary is to propose new or revised economic control instruments that may contribute towards achieving national environment quality objectives and intermediate goals as cost-efficiently as possible.

- **Review of the tax system**

The need to transform Sweden into an ecological society may require an increase in the environmentally adapted elements of the tax system. Since the 1990/91 tax reform was conducted a number of major changes have been implemented in society as a whole and within fiscal policy, making it necessary to review the entire tax system. The Government will initiate such a review in 2006.

- **Individual recordings of hot running water and electricity**

It is the Government's view that an individual recording and charging of electricity and hot running water in multi-family housing may prove to be a feasible instrument for influencing household consumption habits. An inquiry will be initiated on this issue.

- **A knowledge base – facts regarding sustainable consumption**

In order to create motivation, relevant information regarding consumption patterns will be gathered at the Swedish Consumer Agency website. This knowledge database is intended to function as a database of facts for consumers, media and other information providers, authorities, organisations and the private sector who work with sustainable consumption. The knowledge database should also provide concrete examples of the positive effects of a behaviour change.

- **A nationwide energy-efficiency campaign**

A national information campaign on energy efficiency will be conducted by several authorities. The campaign will, among other things, show how to reduce personal energy consumption by taking simple steps.

2.3 Creating a commitment to sustainable consumption

A change in consumption patterns requires changes to lifestyles and also new or changed values. This presupposes a degree of social acceptance and awareness in every consumer and presupposes knowledge of, but also commitment to, these issues. Consumers must change ingrained habits and request information and also make demands on producers and retailers.

NGOs have a unique role to play as knowledge providers and as creators of public opinion, with regard to creating a commitment for the issue of sustainable household consumption. Their network and their dialogue with consumers adds an important local and regional dimension and could, in addition to creating a commitment to these issues, contribute towards enabling an active dialogue among citizens, politicians and authorities. NGOs also play important roles as information providers. Municipal advisers, such as consumer affairs and energy advisers and Agenda 21 coordinators, also fill important functions in the process of working towards achieving an increased commitment in the issue of sustainable consumption, particularly in their role of providing information and knowledge.

The private sector, too, can play a role in creating commitment, especially with respect to marketing activities.

The Government intends to work further on the following measures in particular, in order to increase consumer commitment to the issue of sustainable consumption.

- **Forum on sustainable household consumption**

In order to increase the commitment in society, particularly among consumers and stakeholders, with regard to changing consumption patterns, the Government intends to host a recurring Forum on Sustainable Household Consumption. The aim of this forum is to expand the dialogue on current issues and to bring up important questions for discussion. The forum will also create arenas for cross-sector cooperation.

- **Promoting the consumption of organic food**

The Swedish Consumer Agency will be assigned the task of developing a communication strategy for promoting the consumption of organic labelled food. The strategy should be able to serve as a basis for the Agency's efforts towards promoting organic labelled food, but may be employed by other actors, too.

- **An empowered consumer movement**

The Government believes that an empowered consumer movement is desirable. Therefore, organisations working with consumer related issues will be given continuous financial support.

- **Support for organisations working with projects on sustainable consumption**

In the period 2007–2009, project support allocated by the Swedish Consumer Agency will be directed towards projects on sustainable consumption with particular focus on changing consumption patterns.

- **Increased support to information campaigns promoting fair trade**

In 2006 a campaign was launched involving increased support from the development cooperation appropriations budget towards information campaigns, through organisations promoting fair trade. The support is administered by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). The campaign is intended to contribute towards increasing awareness of global justice issues.

3 How can we achieve sustainable consumption patterns? – What Government is doing

3.1 Eating sustainably

Despite the fact that the part of household incomes spent on food is decreasing, the consumption of food in Sweden is increasing. In 2000 each Swede consumed on average 800 kg of food, almost 40 kg more than a decade before and 30 kg more than the European average. We also eat differently today than we did ten years ago. Basic foods, such as potatoes, dairy products and bread today constitute an increasingly smaller part of our food consumption. Instead, energy-dense and low-nutrient food, such as soft drinks, sweets and snacks, have become more popular. We also eat more meat today, particularly chicken and beef, and a higher degree of imported food. Another trend that influences our eating habits is that of spending an increasingly smaller amount of time on preparing and cooking food. Instead, the consumption of ready-to-eat and frozen food has increased.

Our food consumption is environmentally unsustainable in many ways, for instance, because of production-related emissions into waterways, land and air. Approximately one-third of the total household strain on the environment comes from our eating habits. The environmental strain is different for different foods. Meat production, for example, frequently requires more energy than the production of fruit or vegetables. At the same time meat production is important for keeping the countryside open through the grazing of cattle. Storage and cooking of food can have a large impact on the environmental strain generated by our eating.

Today almost 40 % of all the food consumed in Sweden is produced abroad. This means that our eating habits not only affect development in Sweden but also development in other countries. International food trade also generates environmental damage through transportation within the refining and distribution chains. These do, however, have to be weighed against the potential social and economic advantages.

Our eating, to an increasingly higher extent, creates bad health in the form of overweight and obesity. The number of adults in Sweden who are obese has doubled since 1980 and the number of overweight people has increased by 30 % among men and 20 % among women. The occurrence of overweight and obesity among children (4–18 years) varies between different studies, ranging from 14 to 23 %, out of which 1–4 % are obese. The 2005 Swedish public health report shows that obesity and obesity-related diseases are among the most unevenly distributed illness conditions, socially speaking, and the current trend is that social differences are increasing, among children as well as adults. The Swedish National Food Administration and the Swedish National Institute of Public Health have estimated society's costs for the Swedish unhealthy dietary habits and physical inactivity to amount to SEK 16

billion per year. In 2004 the direct costs of medical care for obesity-related diseases were estimated to be almost SEK 4 billion per year. Add to this approximately SEK 12 billion for a fall in production due to illness.

How can we eat sustainably?

Consumers can influence development through their eating habits and their requirements. Eating sustainably is about eating in a way so as to reduce the strain on the environment, for the sake of personal health and in order to promote economic and social development in Sweden and the rest of the world.

Eating in an environmentally sustainable way means eating food that has been produced using environmentally adapted production methods, such as organic food. Organic labels send out a signal to the consumer about which food has been produced in an environmentally friendly way. A report by the EU Environment Agency (11/2005) indicates that organic labelling has contributed to a more environmentally sustainable development.

Eating sustainably also means keeping a healthy, well-balanced diet that does not lead to overweight and obesity. Turning children and young people into conscious consumers is, in this context, especially important.

Eating sustainably is also about eating products that have been imported from poorer countries and products for which the production process involves ethical or fair consumption requirements on social and environmental responsibility. By consuming foods that have been produced with respect for human beings and the environment, Swedish consumers can contribute to a more fair and just development. Many consumers would like to make ecological consumer choices to an increasingly higher degree. The range of social and ethically labelled products, such as fairtrade labelled products, is, however, very limited. This reason for this lies, among other things, in the difficulty of ensuring, in a sufficiently refined and resource-efficient way, that social criteria are observed in the production process. At the same time an increasing number of producers have begun to integrate social and environmental considerations into their production.

Sustainable food consumption is a complex issue, as it creates several conflicts of objectives. Certain consumption habits, for example, are negative to environmental development while at the same time being positive to the economic and social development of poor countries. This is true, for instance, for the consumption of food produced in developing countries, to which increased trade constitutes an important development motor, but where the processing also requires longer transportation distances and more packaging than locally produced food. Another example is the cultivating of fruits and vegetables which, when cultivated in heated greenhouses, often require a higher degree of energy utilisation than outdoor cultivation, while the latter method could result in longer transportation distances. It is therefore important to internalise external costs, that is, to include the societal costs of consumption in product prices.

The Government has taken several steps within a number of policy areas to increase consumers' opportunities and motives for eating sustainably. Below is a selection of the most important measures, providing an overview of the Government's efforts within this field.

- **Measures intended to promote the consumption of organic food**

Each year approximately SEK 17 million are allocated for market promotion of organic food. Some of these funds are used to increase the consumption of organic food within the public sector, and some to promote household consumption. Measures include education and information to those responsible for public procurements and to institutional household staff, for example.

Since 2002 the Swedish Consumer Agency receives SEK 5 million annually for promoting household consumption of organic food. These efforts have above all focused on developing information material and has resulted in extensive cooperation among different actors on these issues. The Swedish Consumer Agency has also produced a calculator that can be used to compare the costs of organic and conventional foods (www.konsumentverket.se).

- **Support to farmers adhering to a quality certification system**

In Sweden it is possible for farmers adhering to a quality certification system to receive a subsidy. The subsidy amounts to approximately SEK 20 million annually and includes support for organic certification and The Swedish Seal of Quality (Svenskt Sigill). The certification support increases consumers' opportunities for eating sustainably, by ensuring that more products are organic labelled.

- **Information campaign on food labelling**

The Swedish National Food Administration is working on an information campaign on food labelling targeted at consumers. The aim is to make it easier for the consumer to make conscious choices. The Swedish National Food Administration has also been assigned the task of carrying out a national supervision project on fairness and labelling, in order to reduce the risk of misleading consumers. In some instances, consumers have interpreted the control label as information stating that the primary products are Swedish, despite the fact that the control label does not say anything about the origin of primary products, but only states the name of the plant at which the food has been produced.

- **Guidelines regarding school meals**

In the autumn of 2005 the Swedish National Food Administration was assigned the task of developing new guidelines for meals served in schools and pre-schools. The guidelines should follow Swedish nutritional recommendations and prevent the creation of unsound eating habits. These measures are intended to create opportunities for sustainable food consumption by teaching children, young people and their parents sound eating habits at school.

- **Guidelines regarding workplace meals**

In February 2006 the Government assigned the Swedish National Food Administration the task of developing guidelines for workplace meals. These guidelines should provide advice on what constitutes healthy food according to Swedish nutritional recommendations and also show how to promote sound eating habits.

- **A revision of the keyhole symbol labelling**

In Sweden the keyhole symbol has stimulated product development towards the introduction of a product range that is leaner and richer in fibre. The Swedish National Food Administration revised the labelling regulations in 2005. The new regulations involve, among other things, a sharpening of the criteria for fat and food fibre content for certain food groups, along with the introduction of criteria regarding sugar and salt content for certain groups of food. The revised keyhole symbol will send out a more complete signal to the consumer regarding which foods are healthy to consume.

- **Support for ethical consumption**

Social and ethical labelling are important tools for informing consumers and make them aware of global justice issues. The Swedish Fairtrade Labelling Organisation has, since the 2004 fiscal year, received a grant of SEK 1.6 million for its work on actively influencing public opinion and creating a dialogue about ethical consumption.

- **Tomorrow's grocery market**

Swedish Government has initiated a dialogue – "Tomorrow's Grocery Market" – with the relevant stakeholders such as the Government and a number of companies and authorities. The aim has been to reach an agreement regarding the steps required to achieve sustainable development of convenience goods trade, including related transportation. The dialogue focuses on logistics, e-commerce and the content and manufacture of products.

- **Preparation for an action plan on sound eating habits and increased physical activity**

The Swedish National Food Administration, together with the Swedish National Institute of Public Health, have developed the basis of an action plan on sound eating habits and increased physical activity. Drafting of this material, which includes 79 action points, is currently being carried out in the Government Offices. Work is also proceeding on a European level. The European Commission recently published a Green Paper entitled 'Promoting healthy diets and physical activity: a European dimension for the prevention of overweight, obesity and chronic diseases'.

- **Global Responsibility**

Through the Global Responsibility initiative the Government works towards encouraging Swedish corporations to integrate social and

environmental concerns in the form of labour safety, wage policies, etc., into their operations and to report on these efforts to interested parties, including consumers. The Global Responsibility initiative actively pursues information and knowledge-dissemination, for example, through a seminar series and a web site (www.ud.se/ga).

3.2 Sustainable living

Our living habits affect the environment, our health, our safety and our opportunities to participate in cultural and social contexts. Energy utilisation related to our living generates the most substantial impact on the environment, on society and frequently also on our personal finances, and it is within this area that most major sustainability gains could be made. Another important issue is that of waste management. Therefore the action plan focuses above all on household energy consumption and the management of household waste. In Sweden there are approximately 4.4 million homes. Slightly more than half of these are located in multi-family dwellings and the rest are single-family dwellings. The number of single-person households is considerable and has increased in the last decade.

Households are among society's largest energy consumers. All extraction, transformation and utilisation of energy give rise to some kind of environmental strain. Residential and commercial buildings stand for approximately 38 % of the total Swedish energy consumption. Slightly more than 60 % relates to heating and hot water, and the rest is made up of residential building electricity and commercial building electricity. Energy consumption has remained relatively constant since 1970, despite the fact that the number of houses has increased by approximately 40 % in the same period. This development has become possible thanks to considerable energy-effectivisation enabled by technology development. At the same time the consumption of residential building electricity and commercial building electricity has increased significantly since 1970. There are many reasons for this, but the main reason is the increase in the number of households, coupled with a decrease in household size. Another reason is a considerable increase in the number of household appliances per household, which is a result of technology development and the introduction of new products on the market, such as flat-screen TVs and DVD players. Ownership and use of household appliances is largely related to fashion trends and lifestyle. Therefore we have a rebound effect within the field of energy, since the efficiency gains generated for instance by the technology development are eaten up by increased consumption.

Our consumption also produces vast quantities of waste. In 2004 household waste in Sweden amounted to approximately 460 kg per person. This amount, which was on the rise, now remains largely the same as in 2003 and 2002, but it is still uncertain whether the stabilisation of waste quantities constitutes a break in the trend. At the same time, the amount of hazardous waste is increasing. In 2004 around

90 % of household waste was recycled in some form. This is a considerable increase compared to previous years. Skr. 2005/06:107

How can we live sustainably?

A prerequisite for sustainable living is conservation of energy and other natural resources, but it also includes aspects related to health and personal finance, security and accessibility.

Sustainable living places certain requirements on cultural and social contexts, such as proximity to workplaces, shops, waste collection sites and other factors that consumers are dependent upon in their everyday lives. Sustainable living should also be available to everyone and be designed and accessible for everyone. All people, regardless of disability, gender, age or ethnic origin, should be able to access and partake in cultural events, societal information and services, and everyone should be able to transport themselves between their home, workplace and leisure activities. Accessibility is especially important with regard to the demographic development in which the elderly – hence also frequently disabled – will constitute an increasing share of the population. It is therefore important to avoid special solutions.

Living sustainably means having an energy-efficient heating system, energy-efficient appliances and further, using the heating system and the appliances in an energy-conserving way. This can promote an environmentally sustainable development and may also contribute to strengthening personal finances, through reduced energy costs.

Waste management that is easy for consumers and efficient for society is a prerequisite for sustainable living. Further, the waste should be utilised as an efficient resource, such as using old newspapers as raw material when producing new papers. Other important components of sustainable living are easily accessible waste disposal sites coupled with the possibility to easily sort household waste in, or near, one's home. It is particularly important that consumers are able to easily dispose of waste that is particularly hazardous to personal health and the environment, such as paint and chemicals.

Opportunities for living sustainably have increased considerably thanks to increased knowledge and technology developments. Nowadays there is a vast range of energy-efficient household appliances and new residential buildings are constructed without conventional heating systems and consequently require a very low amount of energy for heating purposes. Newly constructed residential buildings are also often favourably located in terms of physical accessibility, thus enabling everyone to enjoy good living. New buildings, however, only make up a small fraction of the total number of houses. More than 90 % of the buildings that are expected to exist 50 years from now have already been constructed. In order to achieve substantial energy-efficiency, to facilitate the recycling of waste and in order to create opportunities for accessible living in a short-term perspective, it is important to focus on steps that can be taken regarding existing buildings, especially in connection with major renovation projects.

- **Monthly electricity readings**

A requirement for monthly recording, reading and reporting of electricity consumption for all consumers will come into force on 1 July 2009. Through the increased frequency of meter reading, consumers will achieve improved control and a more direct connection between consumption and energy costs.

- **Tax reduction for certain energy improvements in single-family dwellings**

In 2004 a tax reduction for certain energy-improving installations in single-family dwellings was introduced. This aims to encourage certain energy-improving measures in buildings intended for permanent residence and applies to biofuel installations for the heating of newly constructed single-family dwellings during the period January 2004–December 2006.

- **Investment subsidy for conversion from direct electric heating**

A five-year subsidy to owners of single-family dwellings and multi-family dwellings has been introduced, with the view to encourage a full or partial conversion from direct electric heating to district heating or to individual heating through the use of biofuels, heat pumps or solar energy. The support will cover up to 30 % of the conversion costs, up to a ceiling of SEK 30 000 per home.

- **Subsidy for the conversion of oil heating systems in residential buildings**

A specific subsidy intended for the conversion of residential building oil heating systems was introduced on Jan 1 2006, with the purpose of creating an incentive for consumers to change over to renewable energy resources, and to break their dependence on oil for heating purposes. The support applies to conversion from oil heating systems to district heating or individual heating using biofuels, mountain, lake or ground heat pumps, or solar energy. The support will cover up to 30 % of the costs, up to a ceiling of SEK 14 000.

- **Building energy declarations**

A system of energy declarations for buildings has been suggested by the Riksdag. The purpose of the energy and indoor environment declarations is to show how much energy is used in buildings and how utilisation may be made more efficient in order to reduce energy consumption, thus increasing consumers' opportunities and motives for adopting energy-efficient consumption patterns. The system is proposed to come into force on 1 October 2006.

- **The green tax shift**

The green tax shift, which is being implemented from 2001–2010, comprises a total of SEK 30 billion. Up until 2006 a tax shift involving slightly more than SEK 17 billion will have been implemented. The

focus of the energy and environment tax increases implemented so far has mainly been on raising the taxes on electricity and heating fuels, which has led to a higher degree of environmental management in the tax system. The tax shift further includes measures intended to achieve sustainable travel. (See section 4.3).

As part of the green tax shift the energy tax on electricity consumed in households and within the service sector was raised by SEK 0.006/kWh on 1 January 2006.

- **Property tax**

Today energy investments yield far higher market values, which in the long run affect tax assessment values and hence the yield from property taxes. A working group has been appointed within the Government Offices to analyse this issue. The group shall develop proposals that result in the design of property taxes that do not counteract – but rather, stimulate – energy-efficient solutions in buildings, while simultaneously adhering to the principle that the tax assessment value should be based on the market value.

- **Recording of household electricity in buildings**

The Swedish National Energy Administration, by direction of the Government, is conducting a measuring study during 2005–2007 that will provide current data on how household electricity is divided between different fields of application. The project aims to increase the knowledge of the actual household energy consumption, in order to be able to develop better targeted information campaigns and other instruments for more efficient energy consumption.

- **Energy labelling**

Since the beginning of the 1990s the EU has adopted an energy labelling system for household appliances. The energy labelling requirements today comprise eight different product groups, among them refrigerators, freezers and dishwashing machines. The European Commission is currently reviewing the present framework directives, which today are limited to household appliances, with the view to extending the labelling system to additional product groups.

- **Energy advisers**

All 290 municipalities in Sweden currently provide energy advisory services targeted at, among others, consumers. In accordance with the 2002 energy policy decision, approximately SEK 90 million annually will be allocated to these advisory services in 2003–2007. In addition, support will be given to regional energy offices. The energy advisory services aim to provide locally and regionally adapted knowledge on energy utilisation and, further, on the prerequisites for reducing energy consumption in commercial and residential buildings. An external evaluation has been conducted, which is intended to serve as a basis for decisions regarding these services in preparation for a new programme period after 2007.

- **More energy-efficient products**

In the beginning of 2005 a framework directive regarding eco-design for energy-consuming products was adopted, aimed at improving the energy-efficiency of energy-consuming products, and further reducing other negative environmental strains. The directive states criteria regarding the establishment of product requirements relating to, for example, energy-efficiency. The member states must implement this directive no later than the summer of 2007.

- **Waste prevention**

The European Commission recently presented a strategy entitled 'Taking sustainable use of resources forward: A Thematic Strategy on the prevention and recycling of waste' (KOM (2005) 666 final). This strategy proposes, among other things, measures intended to stop the amount of waste from increasing. Sweden argues that these suggestions are important in order to obtain a well-functioning and sustainable waste management process and participates actively in this process.

- **Sorting waste**

The Government works towards making it easier for consumers to engage in the sorting out of packaging and recyclable paper. As of January 2005, two ordinances state that the collection systems for packaging and recyclable paper should provide good service to those disposing of waste.

In January 2005 a specific tax incentive for sorting waste in multi-family dwellings was introduced, to be disbursed in 2005 and 2006. Estate owners may be compensated up to 30 % of the costs incurred to establish waste sorting facilities in multi-family residential buildings.

- **The waste portal**

The waste portal is a joint project involving, among others, The Swedish Consumer Agency, The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and The Swedish Association of Waste Management (RVF). This web portal provides information on how to sort waste, why it should be sorted, where to dispose of it and what happens afterwards (www.sopor.nu).

- **The energy cost calculator**

The energy cost calculator is intended for those residing in single-family dwellings and helps them see what different energy-saving measures, such as changing the heating system, could mean to household finances and to the environment. It is available on The Swedish Consumer Agency website (www.konsumentverket.se).

- **The purchasing guide**

The Purchasing Guide assembles various environmental facts, such as price and energy consumption, for a number of different product types, primarily household appliances. The guide is primarily intended for consumers and is available at the Swedish Consumer Agency website (www.konsumentverket.se).

3.3 Sustainable travel

Swedes travel approximately 50 % more today than 25 years ago, measured in the number of kilometres per person. This travel does not primarily involve long-distance holiday trips, but travel to and from the workplace, schools, grocery shops, etc. Each Swedish consumer makes on average three shorter trips a day. In the last ten years air traffic has also increased considerably and issues relating to sustainable tourism receive an increasing amount of attention.

The automobile is the most frequently used means of transportation, regardless of the reason for the trip, and is used for almost 65 % of all travel. The number of cars in Sweden has increased by almost 50 % since 1975. In the same period the population increased by almost 10 %. In 2002 the fuel consumption of modern cars in Sweden was 24 % higher than the European average. The trend in recent years is that this difference is increasing.

On weekdays most car trips are to and from work and school (approximately 30 %) as well as trips related to shopping and service errands (approximately 25 %). Approximately 40 % of all car trips are shorter than 2.5 kilometres. On weekends leisure trips dominate. Travel habits differ between the sexes, with men making a considerably higher number of business trips than women, who travel more frequently for shopping and service errands. Women use public transportation more frequently and more often tend to be passengers rather than drivers of cars. Women also display a far more positive attitude towards public transportation than men (The Swedish Institute for Transport and Communications Analysis, SIKÅ, 2005 yearbook).

Our travelling is fuelled among other things by our need to work, attend school, etc., and many consumers regard it as necessary to achieve a high quality of life. The increased travelling is positive in many ways, as it has contributed towards increased accessibility and mobility for the disabled, and also to a more flexible labour market – effects that are positive both for social and economic sustainability. At the same time the increased travelling contributes to negative external effects through climate change, polluted air and ill health. The travelling also frequently generates a thinning out of local services, which in turn creates a service problem for groups with limited access to cars and public transportation, such as those with limited financial resources or the disabled.

It is, above all, the travelling done by car, bus or plane – all of which run on fossil fuels – which contributes to unsustainable development. Transportation stands for approximately 40 % of the total amount of

carbon dioxide emissions in Sweden and personal transportation generates about 60 % of this. Skr. 2005/06:107

Increased travelling may also be detrimental to our health. Car exhaust fumes have become much cleaner over the past decades, but still contain large amounts of health-damaging substances and traffic noise is a major public health issue, especially in larger cities. Approximately two million people in Sweden are estimated to be subject to traffic noise exceeding the norms approved by the Riksdag, and around 85 % of these live in big cities.

The development of technology has contributed towards the production of more energy-efficient cars, while at the same time cars of today have better engine performance and are equipped with an increasing number of energy-consuming features, such as air conditioning and electronic devices, the effect of which is that total energy consumption has remained at the same level. Further, the number of cars has increased, as has the distance of our trips. Therefore we have a clear 'rebound' effect when it comes to travel, which means that the sustainability gains are eaten up by an increase in unsustainable consumption.

How can we travel sustainably?

More sustainable travelling can be achieved by encouraging the private sector to produce, and consumers to choose, cars that are less fuel-consuming. Travelling in vehicles that run on renewable fuel may also be better in terms of sustainable travel, since such fuels contribute less towards the emission of greenhouse gases, and in some cases also to a smaller amount of hazardous emissions. Prerequisites for this, though, are easy access to filling stations that stock such fuels, and that vehicles running on renewable fuels are available on the market.

Choosing an alternative means of transportation instead of travelling in a car could also contribute towards more sustainable travel, such as choosing public transportation or riding a bicycle. Travel on foot or by bicycle today constitutes approximately 30 % of all trips made. Around 8 % of our travelling is on public transportation, which only makes up for a small part of the total distance we cover each day.

Measures reducing the number cars and other vehicles also contribute towards reduced noise levels and a decrease in the amount of health-damaging emissions. Other steps might involve reducing the number of cars and other vehicles in urban areas. A well-developed IT infrastructure may also contribute towards reducing the need to travel, for instance through increasing the opportunities of telecommuting.

What Government is doing – a selection

- **Proposal regarding carbon dioxide-differentiated vehicle tax**

The Government proposes to reform the vehicle tax on cars, so that it will be based on the vehicle's level of carbon dioxide emission. The purpose of this reform is to create a financial incentive for consumers to

choose fuel-efficient cars. The tax further aims to encourage increasing research within this field, along with the development of cars with lower fuel consumption, as well as to the introduction of low fuel consumption models of existing cars in Sweden. The new regulations are proposed to be effective as of 1 May 2006.

- **Easier access to renewable fuels**

A new law on the obligation to provide renewable fuels, such as ethanol or biogas, is effective as of 1 April 2006. According to the new law all major fuel providers have to offer renewable fuels. The expansion of filling stations is to take place gradually from April 2006 until January 2010, when smaller filling stations must also sell renewable fuels.

- **Environmental tax on air travel**

The Government proposes to introduce a tax on airline tickets, designed as a tax based on transported passengers. The tax is proposed to be included in the green tax shift. The increased consumption of air travel has contributed towards increased emissions of greenhouse gases, which result in increased climate change. The tax is intended to send a signal to consumers and to be part of the ambition to internalise external costs into the price. The law is proposed to come into force on 1 July 2006. Taxes will not, however, be levied on air trips booked before 1 June 2006.

- **Congestion charges in Stockholm**

The city of Stockholm is conducting a trial of congestion charges up until the end of July 2006. The trial is combined with increased public transportation. The purpose of the trial is to test whether congestion charges in combination with an expansion of the public transportation system will contribute towards a more efficient traffic system and a cleaner environment.

- **Clearer labelling system regarding carbon dioxide emission levels in cars**

Today there are requirements for making information on fuel conservation and carbon dioxide emissions available for modern cars that are sold or rented. This labelling system should be developed in order to further make it easy for consumers to choose fuel-efficient vehicles. A labelling system of this type for carbon dioxide emission levels in cars will be developed by, among others, the Swedish Consumer Agency.

- **Tax exemption for diesel cars equipped with particle filters**

In a proposal to the Riksdag the Government suggests a tax exemption on diesel-driven cars, light buses and light trucks equipped with particle filters. Air pollutants in the form of particles constitute a serious risk to public health. The tax exemption is proposed to be a maximum of SEK 6000 per vehicle and the bill is proposed to come into effect on 1 July 2006.

- **Environmental classification of alternative engine fuels**

In a proposal to the Riksdag the Government suggests that alternative engine fuels receive a more favourable tax classification. These changes aim to promote the introduction and utilisation of alternative motor fuels, also called propellants; in other words, fuels intended to replace petrol and diesel fuels. The changes are proposed to come into effect on 1 August 2006.

- **New regulations regarding the purchasing and leasing of green cars for government authorities**

In December 2005 the Government implemented a number of changes to the ordinance regarding the purchasing and leasing of green cars for government authorities. As a result of these changes a minimum of 75 % of all cars purchased or leased by a public authority after 1 January 2006 now must be green cars. This is an increase compared to today's vision of 50 % of the cars being green. In the long-term, this step might lead to more green cars becoming available on the used car market. It may also contribute towards changing the societal norms regarding green cars in a positive direction.

- **The used and new car guides**

The used car guide is one of the most popular websites of the Swedish Consumer Agency. It provides accurate information on the sustainability aspects of used cars, such as fuel consumption. The Swedish Consumer Agency website also offers *The new car guide*, which lists fuel consumption, carbon dioxide emission levels, price, etc., for all new cars that are sold in Sweden (www.konsumentverket.se).

4 Evaluation

Summary: Annual evaluations will be assessed of the progress towards sustainable consumption patterns, with the help of indicators. The evaluation process is intended to raise awareness and create a debate on sustainable household consumption. A final evaluation will be conducted in 2009.

An evaluation constitutes an important part of the strategic development of control instruments and measures. In order to get an overview of the progress of developments within this area, the Swedish Consumer Agency will be assigned the task of providing an annual account of the degree of sustainability of household consumption patterns, with eight indicators as the point of departure.

Conducting an evaluation with the help of indicators is useful, not only in assisting the Riksdag and the Government in selecting measures that will be effective, but also to those among the general public that have an interest in this issue, as well as to corporations, organisations and authorities. The evaluation is also intended to contribute towards raising awareness and to create a debate on issues regarding sustainable

consumption. It might, for example, serve as a basis for discussion at the 'Forum on sustainable household consumption'. Skr. 2005/06:107

A final evaluation will be conducted in 2009. The results will then be delivered to the Riksdag.

4.1 Indicators

The evaluation of the efforts towards achieving sustainable household consumption patterns will take as its starting point eight indicators. An account based on indicators only would not be comprehensive, but point to developments within a limited number of areas. The indicators will, when possible, be gender and age-specific and also include information on socioeconomic status. The indicators are linked to the three areas of the action plan – sustainable eating, sustainable living and sustainable travelling.

Indicators for sustainable household consumption:

1. The number of overweight or obese people (*Sustainable eating*)
2. The market share of organic labelled foods (*Sustainable eating*)
3. Energy utilisation for heating and other electrical power use per unit area in single-family dwellings, multi-family dwellings and commercial buildings (*Sustainable living*)
4. Household access to commercial and public service (such as food, fuels, postal services and elementary schools) (*Sustainable living*)
5. The amount of household waste (*Sustainable living*)
6. Total CO₂ household emissions – direct, indirect and international emissions (*Sustainable eating & Sustainable travelling*)
7. Carbon dioxide emission levels in new cars (*Sustainable travelling*)
8. Household access to public transportation (*Sustainable travelling*)