

ACTION PLAN FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY OF CONSUMPTION IN THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SECTOR

(or NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT – GPP NAP)

BACKGROUND

The European Commission, in Communication 2003/302 on Integrated Product Policy – Building on “Environmental Life-Cycle” Thinking, set the target of encouraging “...*the Member States to draw up publicly available **action plans for greening their public procurement***”.

Such plans:

“.....should contain an assessment of the existing situation and ambitious targets for the situation in three years’ time. The action plans should also state clearly what measures will be taken to achieve this. They should be drawn up for the first time by the end of 2006 and then revised every three years. The action plans will not be legally binding but will provide political impetus to the process of implementing and raising awareness of greener public procurement. They will allow Member States to choose the options that best suit their political framework and the level they have reached, while at the same time enabling an exchange of best practice.”

The European Commission thereafter issued specific Guidelines for setting up National Action Plans on Green Public Procurement (GPP).

Law 296 of 27 December 2006 (Finance Act 2007) states, in Article 1(1126):

“ ...the implementation and monitoring of an ‘Action Plan for the environmental sustainability of consumption by public authorities’ drawn up by the Ministry of the Environment and the Protection of Natural Resources, in concert with the Ministers for the Economy and Finance and for Economic Development ...”

In Article 1(1127) and (1128) the Act goes on to indicate the commodity categories and the Ministerial Committee set up to monitor the environmental sustainability targets.

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1 THE GPP: DEFINITION, TARGETS AND CONTEXT

1.1 *The GPP as an instrument of the Integrated Product Policy*

The official definition of GPP (Green Public Procurement) used as a reference by the European Commission is as follows:

“Green Public Procurement is the approach by which Public Bodies integrate environmental criteria and/or requirements into all stages of their procurement process, thus encouraging the development of environmental technologies and the spread of environmentally sound products, by seeking and choosing outcomes and solutions that have the least possible impact on the environment throughout their whole life-cycle.”

That definition gives rise to certain considerations that it would be helpful to state.

The GPP is a major instrument not only for environmental policies but also for the promotion of technological innovation, contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the European Union policies on competitiveness (the Lisbon Strategy). It should be recalled in this respect that the Action Plan for Environmental Technologies (ETAP)¹, whose aim is the introduction and spread of environmental technologies on the market, gives the GPP a key role.

The objective of the GPP is to integrate environmental considerations into the procurement process of Public Authorities and to guide their choices of goods, services and works that have the lowest environmental impact; it may therefore perform a very important role in the spread of a more environmentally conscious market and mentality. It should be pointed out in particular that the integration of environmental aspects in procurement processes is based on an overall vision of the whole life cycle, so that not only the aspects attributable to design, production, use and disposal can be taken into consideration, but also the actual costs to the community. This approach determines the actual potential of the GPP, which may be regarded as an instrument for containing public spending in that it tackles not just the cost of producing an asset but its entire life cycle, besides offering a cultural model for containing consumption and for a less materialistic society, in line with the provisions of Articles 68, 93 and 154 and Annex VIII of Legislative Decree 163 of 12 April 2006.

It is also pointed out that Legislative Decree 163 of 12 April 2006, in Article 68, also states that “wherever possible” consideration must be given to the aspects of environmental protection in identifying specific technologies. This approach constitutes a strong normative guide to be followed by the Public Authorities, without entailing higher costs for the public purse.

The approach based on the life cycle is the one emerging from the European strategy, the “Integrated Product Policy (IPP)”, whose basic documents are the Green Paper² and the Commission Communication on the IPP³.

The purpose of the Integrated Product Policy is to strengthen and guide environmental policies on products and services in order to promote the development of a more “ecological” market, focussing to this end on the product/service system by taking an approach based on life cycle analysis; it proposes a set of instruments and strategies designed to channel design, stimulate supply and demand, encourage consumers to make informed choices and reconcile financial with environmental considerations. The IPP approach is based on the finding that an intervention on the market side may facilitate the more effective attainment of environmental objectives in synergy with sectoral environmental policies.

¹ Communication COM(2004)38: “Stimulating Technologies for Sustainable Development: An Environmental Technologies Action Plan for the European Union”.

² Green Paper on the Integrated Product Policy, COM(2001)68.

³ Commission Communication to the Council and the European Parliament: “Integrated Product Policy. Building on environmental life cycle thinking”, COM(2003)302.

This is why the GPP is regarded as one of the main operating instruments under the Integrated Product Policy and is a market lever that can enhance the results made possible by the synergetic use of the set of other instruments contained in the IPP “tool kit”.

It should be borne in mind that public procurement should refer to the three pillars of sustainability (environmental, economic and social), the social criteria including health and safety and being incorporated with the ethical criteria. In this regard, it would be more appropriate to use the term Sustainable Public Purchasing, or SPP, as well). In the light of certain experience, there is a move towards this broader concept, although this is still in the phase of methodological definition. In the National Action Plan (NAP), consideration has been given to those internationally recognised ethical-social aspects that also form part of established practice of bodies at both national and Community level that have adopted a GPP policy (or, more accurately, a Sustainable PP policy).

To gain an idea of the potential of the GPP on the European market, one merely needs to think that the volume of spending by public bodies on procurement in Europe is an average of 16.3% of GDP (equivalent to EUR 1,500 billion)⁴; the demand for “green” products, services and work may therefore affect broad swathes of European commercial transactions, influencing the market, companies and products / services or works on that market and promoting the attainment of environmental improvement targets.

Systematic effort to introduce environmental criteria in public procurement, pursuing the objective of reducing the environmental impact associated with the life cycle of the products and guiding the market along the environmental path, may be of special relevance in contributing towards tackling various environmental problems.

1.2 The potential of the GPP

The use of the GPP, in synergy with the other IPP instruments, may produce significant strategic environmental results, such as a reduction in climate-changing gas emissions, the production of wastes and the production of hazardous substances.

It should also be pointed out that the GPP also has other implications for the body applying it and in general for the context of environmental and economic policies:

- it promotes the spread of sustainable consumption and purchasing models to private companies and individuals as well, in that the public authorities may, by setting an example, have a role in influencing public opinion;
- it promotes the rationalisation of public spending, on the one hand by disseminating an attitude of greater concern to keep down unnecessary consumption – not just among those who in practice make the purchases, but also among the staff who, for various reasons work in public sector offices – and on the other hand through the broader adoption of a more careful approach to assessing the price of the goods, services or works being purchased. This is because the GPP helps to think about the total cost, which includes not just the price but the indirect costs (associated with the use and disposal of the product itself), so that sound business and financial procurement choices can be made, taking the medium- and long-term view (the LCC – Life Cycle Costing approach); furthermore, if this is backed by a costs/benefit/performance analysis, it would enable the optimum allocation of resources by the public bodies.
- it promotes the integration of environmental considerations in the body’s other policies, with cross-involvement of sectors that have not traditionally been concerned with the environment (administration) and sectors that could have a marked effect on the body’s environmental performance, such as transport, infrastructure and building. It also supports the various instruments of environmental policy, in line with the logic of the Integrated Product Policy being promoted on a European scale such as the improvement programmes set up as part of EMAS processes or ISO 14001 or Agenda 21 action plans, or simply the body’s political will to improve its environmental impact and demonstrate the results, both internally and externally;
- it promotes the spread of an environmental mentality in both the supply and the demand market. The sustainable procurement policy makes it possible significantly to reinforce existing incentives for

⁴ A report on the functioning of public procurement markets in the EU: benefits from the application of EU directives and challenges for the future.

research and development and for innovation, especially in the field of environmental technologies, among economic operators;

- it promotes an increase in the competences of public purchasers in that it places the priority on responsibility and the ability to optimise procurement choices not only in business but also in financial terms;
- it encourages companies to invest in R&D and to propose ecologically innovative solutions that can meet the needs of the public-sector contracting entity or specific demands or for submitting more competitive tenders in response to performance requirements⁵. Public demand may be a major factor in directing the supplier towards ecological innovation, which is also one of the European Union's strategic objectives and has an obvious link with the Competitive and Innovation Framework Programme.

2 STRUCTURE OF THE GPP NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

This GPP National Action Plan document outlines the strategy for the dissemination of Green Public Procurement, the commodity categories, the reference environmental targets to be attained, both qualitative and quantitative, and the general methodological aspects.

The Ministry of the Environment and the Protection of Natural Resources will be issuing a series of decrees defining the minimum environmental criteria to be included in the above purchasing procedures above and below the Community reference threshold, for the commodity categories identified by the Finance Act 2007 and consistent with those identified in this Plan. The Decree identifying the minimum environmental requirements for each category will set out the specific methodological guidelines and the sector targets.

As of this time, the environmental requisites for homogeneous product groups are being drawn up by the European Commission, with experts from all the Member States contributing towards their definition.

3 THE GPP NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

3.1 *Objects*

The purpose of the National Action Plan is to promote the dissemination of the GPP to public bodies and facilitate the necessary conditions so that the GPP can achieve its full potential as an instrument for improving the environment.

Consistent with the guidance provided by the Commission, the Italian Action Plan aims to disseminate the GPP by means of the following actions:

- involvement of GPP stakeholders at national level;
- dissemination of knowledge of the GPP in Government Authorities and other public bodies through the provision of information and training;
- definition, for products, services and works identified as priorities having regard to their environmental impact and volume of spending, of methodological guidance on setting up "sustainable" procurement processes and environmental criteria to be included in tender specifications;
- definition of national targets to be attained and redefined every three years;
- periodical monitoring of dissemination of the GPP and analysis of the environmental benefits obtained.

The measures to be adopted under the National Action Plan, particularly on the basis of the minimum environmental criteria, will make it possible to guide public bodies on the application of the GPP and to have the instruments to find out about and support GPP strategies, to include through the dissemination of instruments for the wider promotion of greener goods, services and contracts of works.

⁵ Procuring Innovation, from Chapter 19 of Handbook of Procurement, (edited by) Dmitri, N., Piga, G. and Spagnolo, G., Cambridge University Press, 2006.

3.2 The framework of strategies and regulations involving the GPP

The Lisbon Strategy for growth and employment launched by the EU in 2000 identified environmental sustainability as one of the pillars of European competitiveness. One of the instruments boosting market innovation is the promotion of sustainable procurement.⁶

Green Public Procurement is a fundamental instrument for the European policies on sustainability, as widely confirmed by the frequent references in key European and national documents:

- the Sixth Environment Action Programme of the European Community (COM(2001)31);
- the Green Paper on Integrated Product Policy (COM(2001)68);
- Communication from the Commission: a proposal for the Gothenburg European Council on “A Sustainable Development in Europe for a better world: a European Union strategy for Sustainable Development”, as further revised and updated (COM(2001)264);
- Communication from the Commission – Towards a Thematic Strategy on the Prevention and Recycling of Waste, as further revised and updated (COM(2003)301);
- Communication from the Commission – Towards a Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment, as further revised and updated (COM(2004)60);
- the Communication from the Commission - Environmental Technologies Action Plan – ETAP – Stimulating Technologies for Sustainable Development: an Environmental Technologies Action Plan for the European Union (COM(2004)38);
- First Report on the implementation of ETAP (COM(2005)16);
- Draft Declaration on the Guiding Principles for sustainable development (COM(2005)218);
- Communication from the European Commission on “Policy Coherence for Development” (2005);
- Italian Strategy on environmental action for sustainable development, Interministerial Economic Planning Committee (CIPE) Resolution 57/2002.

In particular, the GPP and its practical implementation are described in the following normative documents:

- Communication from the Commission on Integrated Product Policy - Building on “Environmental Life-Cycle” Thinking (COM(2003)302); calling on Member States to adopt a National Action Plan on GPP by 2006;
- Commission Interpretative Communication (COM(2001)274) on “The Community law applicable to public procurement and the possibilities for integrating environmental considerations into public procurement”, describing the options provided by the regulations on procurement to integrate environmental criteria into the various stages of the procurement procedure.

In addition, in 2004 the European Commission published the Handbook entitled “Buying Green!” and, in 2005, distributed Guidelines addressed to Member States for setting up GPP National Action Plans.⁷ The issue of a Communication in early 2008 is planned, in which the European targets for the GPP will be set.

The legal framework for the inclusion of environmental criteria in public procurement was clarified in Directives 2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC, which introduced the possibility of integrating environmental considerations into procurement procedures, in line with the guidelines issued by the EU itself over the past few years and also with established practice among various public authorities in Europe. In this way, the uncertainties that persisted on the subject have now been finally clarified, since the normative provisions have described the possibilities and also the procedures whereby an authority may engage in environmentally sustainable procurement in a legally accepted manner.⁸

⁶ “Facing the challenge. The Lisbon Strategy for growth and employment. Report by the High Level Group chaired by Wim Kok”, November 2004.

⁷ Guidelines for Member States to set up Action Plans on Green Public Procurement (GPP) distributed to members of the formal IPP working group established within the Community.

⁸ For the relevant normative details, see the analysis in the Ministry of the Environment study report “*Acquisti Verdi della PA: stato dell'arte, evoluzione normativa e indicazioni metodologiche*” [Green Public Procurement: state of the art, normative developments and methodological guidance], which may be downloaded from the Ministry's website, ...

Directives 2004/17/EC and 2004/18/EC have in fact recognised the validity of environmental protection and social protection aspects in making the principle of economic advantage conditional on an assessment of those criteria.

In particular, Directive 2004/18 covers environmental protection in recitals 1, 5, 6, 27, 29, 33, 43, 44 and 46 and in Articles 23, 26, 27, 48 and 53.

The sections of the Directive relating to environmental protection cover in particular:

- technical specifications;
- conditions of performance of the contract;
- environmental protection obligations;
- technical and professional ability;
- environmental management standards;
- contract award criteria.

In Italy, Legislative Decree 163, 12 April 2006, the Code of Public Contracts for Works, Services and Supplies, transposed the normative provisions on GPP contained in the Directives, in some places introducing more vigorous inputs than the Community template as regards the advisability of taking environmental and social aspects into consideration. In particular, Article 2 has introduced the possibility of making the principle of the most economically advantageous tender subordinate to criteria inspired by social demands, environmental and health protection and the promotion of sustainable development; Article 68 (Article 26 of European Directive 18/2004), entitled “Technical specifications”, explicitly requires that the technical specifications “*shall, wherever possible, be defined in such a way as to take account of the criteria of accessibility for persons with a disability, adequate design for all users, and environmental protection*”⁹.

The other relevant provisions transposed by Legislative Decree 163/2006 are contained in the following articles: Article 40 and Article 42 on technical and professional ability (Article 48 of European Directive 2004/18); Article 44 on environmental management standards (Article 50 of European Directive 2004/18); Article 58, which inserts the elements of environmental sustainability among those implying that a contract can be considered as “particularly complex” so that there can be recourse to “competitive dialogue”; Article 69 on the conditions for the performance of the contract (Article 26 of Directive 2004/18); and Article 83, the “most economically advantageous tender”.

CIPE Resolution 57 of 2 August 2002 on the “Italian Environmental Strategy 2002/2010” had already provided for “the integration of the environmental factor into the market” by attributing to the public sector “the fundamental role in stimulating the supply”, establishing as a target to be attained by 2007 that at least 30% of the goods procured by public authorities should also meet environmental requirements.

Another national regulation that is to be harmonised in the field of intervention under the GPP Action Plan is Ministerial Decree 203/2003, which introduced an obligation for all public bodies, and companies in which the majority of the capital is public, to procure manufactured items and goods made with recycled, post-consumption materials, entered in the Recycling Register, amounting to at least 30% of their annual requirement.

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The main provisions regulating aspects of environmental protection come under different headings: the tasks of oversight assigned to the regulatory body, the *Autorità per la vigilanza sui contratti pubblici di lavori, servizi e forniture* (Article 6); the contact office (*sportello*) for public contracts (Article 9); service contracts (Article 20); the principles pertaining to contracts excluded from the application of the Code (Article 27); rules pertaining to the technical and professional ability of suppliers of products and services (Article 42); environmental management standards for services and works (Article 44); rules for the negotiated procedure with prior publication of a contract notice (Article 56); the negotiated procedure without prior publication of a contract notice (Article 57); rules pertaining to the competitive dialogue (Article 58); provisions pertaining to technical specifications (Article 68); special conditions governing the performance of the contract (Article 69); bid bonds (Article 75); provisions pertaining to the criterion of the economically most advantageous tender (Article 83); standards applicable in special sections of Community relevance (Article 203).

3.3 The main cognitive instruments for the identification of environmental criteria

In tracing the environmental preferability characteristics of products, services and works, i.e. factors associated with the environmental life cycle that qualify an output in environmental terms (environmental criteria), in many cases it is possible to take advantage of research and studies already conducted at national and international levels. Life Cycle Assessments have in fact already been carried out on some of the goods, services and works under the present Action Plan, or the “critical” environmental elements have been analysed and identified with a view to further monitoring, together with the procedures for verification of their impact. The outcome has been the codification of “environmental criteria” in technical standards, that have been issued either at European level, or at national level, or by internationally recognised organisations.

In certain cases, these technical standards may serve as a useful reference when they have what the regulations on contracts regard as the characteristics necessary for their usability in tendering procedures, and when they demonstrate the findings of a calculation based on scientific information and by means of a process open to all the parties concerned, and when they are accessible to all¹⁰.

It should also be pointed out that the European Commission itself has suggested that reference be made to projects and initiatives developed at European level containing examples of environmental criteria and “sustainable tenders”, which in turn are based on existing cognitive instruments (the Procura+, DEEP, LEAP and other projects in particular will be recalled).

In order to activate the GPP, therefore, recourse can be made to a series of cognitive instruments providing information on the life cycle on the basis of which the ecological characteristics of the goods and services to be procured can be selected and identified.

The instruments available can be grouped in the following categories:

- Environmental Labels (ISO Type I, regulated by ISO Standard 14024, e.g. EU *Eco-label*)
- Environmental self-declarations (ISO Type II, regulated by ISO Standard 14021, e.g. *Mobius loop*, declaration of bio-degradability, *Energy Star*)
- Environmental Product Declarations (ISO Type III, regulated by ISO Standard 14025)
- Mandatory marking and labelling (e.g. labelling of energy saving (energy class of domestic electrical appliances), labelling of hazardous substances (Directive 81/957/EEC and subsequent directives)
- Certification of environmental management systems for activities and services influencing the characteristics of the product procured (e.g. certification of environmental forest management such as FSC and PEFC)
- The ISO Type I environmental labels are voluntary schemes based on multiple environmental criteria, verified by independent third parties who issue the label to be used on the products concerned, indicating the overall environmental preferability of a product within a given category, based on life cycle considerations.

Under the GPP, these labels are the main benchmark for the identification of criteria relating to the typology of the products in question; the environmental criteria covered by Type I Labels may in fact be used as environmental requirements (if they are relevant to the subject of the contract), as can the possession of the label as (non-exclusive) proof.

Naturally these criteria, if they are to serve the purpose, must be assessed on the basis of the methodology proposed in the National GPP Plan as it relates to market analyses. Where appropriate, they may also be backed by LCC evaluations, cost-benefit assessments that generally take account of the concept of sustainability.

¹⁰ Art 68 of Legislative Decree 163, 12 April 2006, Code of Public Contracts for Works, Services and Supplies.

Into this category come environmental labels that are operational and in wide use on the European and world market such as the European eco-label and other national labels such as the German Blue Angel, the Scandinavian White Swan, etc. In particular, the European eco-label is a key benchmark, as it provides a guarantee of the fact that its criteria have been based on the best environmental characteristics found in products disseminated throughout the Community market, in consideration of the absence of a national mark.

Other labels too, both those already existing and those that may be tried out at a later date, may be effectively assessed under the GPP plan, provided that they are characterised by objective scientific criteria.

Environmental self-declarations (ISO Type II), mandatory markings and labelling and system certifications differ from each other in that they represent reference standards limited to one typology of environmental impact or given commodity sectors; among these are energy labelling, the *Mobius loop*, biodegradability declarations, organic farming labels, certifications of origin of timber, etc. These too provide a very useful cognitive instrument for defining and verifying environmental requirements.

Environmental Product Declarations, or EPDs, ISO Type III, are “Quantified environmental data for a product based on predetermined parameters contained in ISO 14040 (Life Cycle Assessment - LCA), which may be supplemented by other qualitative or quantitative information”.

In particular, a Type III Environmental declaration is based on an LCA analysis and follows specific protocols known as PCRs (Product Category Rules); these provide rules and requirements discussed and agreed among the various stakeholders, so that the data and information on a given commodity category can be comparable.

Type III declarations are extremely effective working instruments for the GPP, since they can be used to determine and compare the environmental performance of the products to which they refer and to demonstrate the data that may be relevant to a given tender office introducing environmental criteria. The dissemination of DAPs on the market means that a series of standardised environmental data on product groups can be readily compared. Referring to the data in public procurement procedures is useful in arousing attention to environmental performance, especially in those sectors such as the food and building industries in which Type I Labels do not exist or are hard to apply.

Other cognitive instruments for the GPP are certifications of companies' environmental management systems according to EMAS Regulations or the ISO 14001 Standard, especially for certain contracts of services and works, in which possession of such certification may be used in the candidate selection phase as a means of assessing the economic operator's technical ability to adopt appropriate environmental management measures during the performance of the contract.

Other sources that should be cited are the cogent type of European standards containing requirements or prescriptions relating to the subject of the contract and the procedures for its performance, on the basis of which the minimum environmental criteria will be defined. This includes the standards for the properties that certain products must have, now or in the future (having regard to the measures that will follow on the energy-using product Directive (2005/32/EC) “Establishing a framework for the setting of eco-design requirements for energy-using products”, the provisions of the Directive on restrictions on hazardous substances (2002/95/EC) “Restriction on the use of hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment”, the regulations placing specific obligations on producers, such as the WEEE Directive (2002/96/EC) on waste electrical and electronic equipment), or again the special requirements in specific categories, which have positive effects in environmental terms (Directive on the “energy performance of buildings”). These directives provide legal backing and protection for tender offices wishing to introduce selective criteria based on environmental preferability or to acquire any product, services or works with higher environmental performance.

3.4 Experience with GPP

Public bodies have started to try out GPP practices for the past few years.

In Italy various local authorities have embarked on this path, as well as certain production streams and networks and working groups, in order to promote GPP practice at grassroots level.

These ventures have been a strong driving force for the dissemination of GPP in Italy, creating a broad base of knowledge on specifications on sustainability and on the methods of implementing GPP; this has been achieved, for example, by launching websites and the production of advisory documentation. On this subject, see the experiments conducted by Coordinamento Agenda21 and GPP-Net.

As regards the positioning of Italy by comparison with other European countries, the most recent research available on the state of the art of GPP in Europe, conducted by the Take 5 Consortium on behalf of the European Commission¹¹, has classified Italy in eighth position based on the number of tender documents over the threshold containing environmental criteria, as analysed by the research group.

3.5 The strategic reference environmental targets for GPP

Under the GPP strategy for Italy, the intention is to address certain environmental issues of a general nature that are regarded as being particularly significant in our context.

The issues are:

- Efficiency and savings in the use of resources, especially energy, thus reducing CO₂ emissions.

The environmental criteria and guidance set out in the National Action Plan will need first of all to promote the achievement of what is recognised as a priority in the environmental field by reducing consumption of fossil fuel energy by increased energy efficiency and by the use of renewable sources. With the GPP instrument and under this Action Plan, therefore, action will be taken to increase public demand for high energy efficient products and technologies and “energy services” and to contribute towards converting today’s building to eco-friendly building. Reducing energy consumption will have as a direct consequence a reduction in CO₂ emissions and will make a practical contribution towards attaining the target set by the Kyoto Protocol.

- Reduction in the use of hazardous substances.

To achieve this objective, minimum environmental criteria will be set and methodological guidance will be provided on the procurement of supplies whose life cycle is characterised by the absence or the least possible quantities of such substances and to encourage the purchase and use of products with these special features under contracts for services and works.

- Quantitative reduction in waste products.

Encouraging proactive behaviour patterns directed towards the rationalisation of purchasing as well as environmental criteria that promote the procurement and dissemination of long-life, easily reusable products containing recycled materials, with a lower volume of disposable products (packaging), will lead to a reduction in the generation of waste.

As a result the GPP National Action Plan will have a positive impact on other environmental problems such as the reduction in polluting emissions and lowering the environmental risks from such emissions.

All actions undertaken pursuant to the GPP must comply with two important principles for the promotion of sustainable development:

All the actions undertaken under the GPP must comply with two key principles for the promotion of sustainable development:

- Pursuit of the principle of the dematerialisation of our economy, in the sense of the gradual reduction of waste and the optimisation of the resources used (materials and energy) to perform

¹¹ “Green Public Procurement in Europe 2005 Status Overview”, October 2005, TAKE 5 Consortium.

the same functions; this may be achieved by promoting technological innovation in production cycles, the development of products made from raw materials that are renewable or with a lower content of non-renewable resources, the use of renewable energy sources, and replacing the purchase of products by the procurement services performing the same function;

- Dissemination of models of purchasing and consumption that place the emphasis on environmental impact and the use of resources through good management practices; attention should therefore be drawn to the dissemination of knowledge on proper management, energy savings and the recovery of products and materials at the end of their life cycle. Wherever possible familiarity with these aspects should be channelled through information activities and easy-to-read documents addressed to those responsible for purchasing and those who use the goods in question.

3.6 The categories

As of this time, 11 categories have been identified as the priority sectors of intervention for the GPP, chosen in the light of the following parameters:

- environmental impact;
 - volume of public spending involved.
- A) FURNISHINGS (OFFICE FURNITURE, SCHOOL FITTINGS, FITTINGS FOR ARCHIVE AND READING ROOMS)**
 - B) BUILDING (CONSTRUCTION AND RESTRUCTURING OF BUILDINGS, WITH PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO BUILDING MATERIALS, ROAD BUILDING AND ROAD MAINTENANCE)**
 - C) WASTE MANAGEMENT**
 - D) URBAN AND COUNTRY SERVICES (MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC GREEN SPACE, STREET FURNITURE)**
 - E) ENERGY SERVICES (LIGHTING, HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING OF BUILDINGS, PUBLIC LIGHTING AND LIGHTING SYSTEMS)**
 - F) ELECTRONICS (ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC OFFICE EQUIPMENT AND RELATED CONSUMABLES, TELECOMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT)**
 - G) TEXTILE PRODUCTS AND FOOTWEAR**
 - H) STATIONERY (PAPER AND CONSUMABLES)**
 - I) CATERING (CANTEEN SERVICES AND FOOD SUPPLIES)**
 - J) BUILDING MANAGEMENT SERVICES (CLEANING SERVICES AND HYGIENE MATERIALS)**
 - K) TRANSPORT (TRANSPORT VEHICLES AND SERVICES, SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY SYSTEMS)**

4 GPP NATIONAL ACTION PLAN OBJECTIVES AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA

In line with what is requested by the European Commission, the Italian Action Plan will set certain quantitative objectives to be attained by 2009. For its own part, the European Commission is drawing up its own targets, which are to be included among the objectives of the Italian plan so as to obtain immediately comparable data.

A careful definition of the objectives will be based on a fairly targeted cognitive picture as a starting point, whereas as of this time it is still fragmentary, as shown below.

If marked discrepancies by comparison with the objectives are found in the light of the monitoring activities, the targets may be revised and amended en route.

4.1 Knowledge base available on the application of the GPP in Italy

The national knowledge base on the dissemination of GPP practices as of this date is based on the following sources:

4.1.1 Studies and research

TAKE 5 Study¹² (2005) commissioned by the European Commission and used as a reference by the Commission in setting the European targets:

35% of Italian public tenders contain more than one environmental criterion, whereas fewer than 10% contain more than 3 environmental criteria.

Characteristics and limits of the data: tenders above the threshold only – quantitative and non-qualitative assessment of environmental criteria – limited number of tenders (84)

Survey by the Ministry of the Environment (2004):

34% of provinces and 18% of communes have introduced environmental criteria into their procurement processes.

Characteristics and limits of the data: the survey, based on generic questions, does not provide quantitative information (number of products procured, with their ecological characteristics or volume of expenditure) or qualitative information on the criteria included in tenders. This means that the resulting information is merely a projection based on a “subjective” finding (percentage of bodies implementing GPP).

Previous, less significant studies: ICLEI 2003 (Study contract to survey the state of play of green public procurement in the European Union, Freiburg, July 2003) – *fewer than 10% of Italian bodies introducing environmental criteria into over 50% of their tenders.*

Subnational studies: Focus Lab (31% of local bodies including environmental criteria in their procurement processes, based on the monitoring of Communes, Mountain Communities, a Park Authority and one Local Health Unit office, amounting to a total of 95 bodies in 4 provinces: Bologna, Reggio Emilia, Modena and Pesaro Urbino, between January 2003 and April 2004, with monitoring in mid-2005).

4.1.2 Data from the experience of bodies active in GPP in Italy

Another item of information on the dissemination of GPP in Italy is the number of bodies participating in the national GPP networks and the GPP working group of Coordinamento Agenda 21.

4.1.3 Data from Consip S.p.A.

Data on the procurement of products by public bodies with environmental criteria can be derived from the CONSIP S.p.A. conventions for the products and services for which environmental criteria have been introduced (e.g. paper).

4.2 National target

The national target is to bring the level of “environmentally preferable” procurement into line with the highest European levels by 2009. At present, Italy is in eighth position among the 25 European countries, based on the survey conducted by Studio Take 5 on various GPP implementation parameters (such as the number of tenders using environmental preferability criteria). Attainment of this target will enable Italy to improve its position as compared with those countries regarded as being most committed to implementing GPP policies.

The results achieved by the implementation of the Plan will be assessed by the use of the indicator being drawn up by the European Commission and Eurostat, which will probably be used to calculate the “value of sustainable tenders compared with the total number of public tenders”.

¹² “Green Public Procurement in Europe 2005 Status Overview”, October 2005, TAKE 5 Consortium.

It will be necessary, however, to ensure that:

- a) the minimum environmental criteria, when available, are incorporated into CONSIP calls for tenders where technically feasible, taking CONSIP's programme of activities into account;
- b) at least 30% of the regions, provinces, metropolitan cities and communes with a population of over 15 000 adopt procurement procedures complying with the minimum environmental criteria;
- c) the bodies managing national parks and protected maritime areas that come under the Ministry of the Environment incorporate the minimum environmental criteria in their purchasing procedures.

It is expected that an indicator for the percentage of total environmentally preferable spending compared with total expenditure on goods, services and works purchased by such bodies will be defined, to be quantified thereafter as more data become available.

Furthermore, for each category identified, where possible targets will be defined in terms of the expenditure incurred for procurement complying with the minimum environmental criteria as a percentage of the total for all comparable national public spending. Those targets will be set out in individual technical annexes.

The integration of those criteria into the purchasing contract award procedures drawn up by the public authorities will also be promoted, as set out in Article 1 of the Legislative Decree 165/2001.

The time scale for the national targets will be up to 2009, and they will be revised every three years, possibly in incremental steps; if it emerges from the findings of annual monitoring that there is a significant divergence from the targets that might prevent them from being attained by 2009, the causes will be analysed with a view to either recalibrating those targets or embarking on measures (mainly the provision of training and information) to facilitate their achievement.

There might, on the other hand, be divergences in the other direction (for example, if new incentives lead to greater increases in the volume of procurement of a given product exceeding those expected), and these in turn will lead to the need to revise the targets.

4.3 The minimum environmental criteria

The National Action Plan refers to specific decrees issued by the Ministry of the Environment and the Protection of Natural Resources identifying a set of "minimum" environmental criteria for each type of purchase within the sphere of the commodity categories identified.

Minimum environmental criteria may be defined that are applicable to several categories at once (for example on eliminating the use of specific ecologically noxious or toxic substances). Quantitative targets and deadlines will be defined for each criterion or set of criteria, with reference to their application in public procurement practices. The sectoral objectives will mean that an approximate calculation can be made of the "savings in environmental impact", by means of appropriate indicators (such as the savings in CO₂ kg per million euro spent on the procurement of paper).

The minimum environmental criteria are the "technical indications" of the National Action Plan, which will consist of both general considerations and specific considerations of a mainly environmental and, where possible, ethical/social nature associated with the various phases of the tendering procedures (the scope of the contract, technical specifications, the award criteria in the procedures for the awarding of contracts to the economically most advantageous tender, the conditions of performance of the contract) which, if they are incorporated by the offices managing the tenders, will be useful in classifying a purchase or assignment of a contract as "sustainable".

The environmental criteria are defined as "minimum" in that they are the "base" elements of the qualification of environmentally preferable ventures, and the sum of the technical elements that can guarantee an appropriate response on the tenders market.

CONSIP will arrange to share with the Ministry of the Environment the market analysis it is to carry out in order to define the environmental characteristics for the commodity categories covered by the Conventions specified under the Schedule of Activities established on an annual basis. The findings

from those market surveys will form a knowledge base for the definition of the minimum environmental criteria identified by the Management Committee referred to in section 6 below.

CONSIP S.P.A., under the Programme of Rationalisation of Public Expenditure, will be called upon to incorporate the minimum environmental criteria in its own calls for tender, where this is technically feasible; this means that the procurement bodies that have signed up to the Conventions (framework agreements with their own specific logo) will in practice be implementing “sustainable procurement” and operating in accordance with the GPP National Action Plan.

The environmental criteria to be used in calls for tender must be scientifically valid, verifiable by the awarding body and achievable by the tendering companies.

Where possible, therefore, the criteria will refer to the technical standards for the official eco-labels of various types and to the other existing information sources, as suggested by the European Commission, and they will be geared to ensure compliance with the principles of non distortion of competition and of the level playing field.

The environmental characteristics that are to be identified in connection with including in the contract award procedure the attribution of award points to the economically most advantageous tender could consist of assigning such points for certain areas of performance that may not yet be found on the market. This category of information would play a very important role: providing benchmarks to the domestic market for trends arising from technical and normative requirements, usually of Community origin, that will in the future become binding and will in practice mean that products not meeting those requirements will no longer be admissible within the borders of the Community (as in the case of the “measures” that will be launched pursuant to the Directive on “*establishing a framework for the setting of ecodesign requirements for energy-using products*”).

This class of “criteria” will meet the objective of stimulating sectors concerned with environmental innovation and anticipating trends in public demand in the Community, which is increasingly inclined to choose products, services and works in the light of their eco-friendliness.

The set of environmental criteria to be identified under the Action Plan, moreover, will provide a reference framework not only to the market but also to the offices calling for tenders which, in establishing the technical requirements for a tender specification, as stated by the relevant provision of the Italian Code of Public Contracts, are under an obligation “*Whenever possible, to establish them in such a manner as to take account of the criteria of accessibility for persons with a disability, appropriate design for all users and environmental protection*”.

Another factor which should be borne in mind in drawing up tender documents, here again to encourage contractors to propose innovatory solutions, relates to the requirement of functionality and operating results rather than cut-and-dried solutions. Setting requirements based on an output or a result rather than those based on a specific solution serves as a challenge to companies in generating ideas and innovation (process, product, consignment, integration, etc.). In this way, the need to be met is identified and contractors are invited to suggest different solutions. While leaving them free to offer innovatory proposals, the contracting office must however specify, where appropriate, that preset criteria have to be complied with (including the environmental protection criteria, in line with the provisions of Directive 2004/18/EC and the Code of Public Contracts for works, services and supplies).¹³

The criteria identified by the Action Plan will not prevent the introduction of more advanced criteria by the bodies already operating under the GPP system or able to access broader environmental provision. To facilitate the implementation of further criteria or more sophisticated environmental performance, specific information for each sector of intervention will be drawn up.

As required by the European Commission, there must be a three-yearly review of the Action Plan.

¹³ Green Paper “Procurement for innovation”, DG Industry Expert Group, EC, 2006.

4.4 The procedure for defining minimum environmental criteria

The Ministry of the Environment coordinates the GPP National Action Plan Management Committee (which is described in section 6 below), which selects the minimum environmental criteria and presents them to the Standing Panel on the GPP National Action Plan for broader consultation.

4.4.1 Scope of the procedure

The procedure identifies the steps that need to be taken in order to define the minimum environmental criteria for public contracts belonging to the categories defined by this document.

Once the minimum environmental criteria are available they will be incorporated in CONSIP calls for tenders where this is technically feasible. The inclusion of those criteria in the purchasing and assignment procedures drawn up by the public authorities, as provided by Legislative Decree 163/2006, will also be encouraged.

4.4.2 Field of application

The procedure is applied by the Management Committee set up to implement the Action Plan; within that Committee, technical activities will be carried out by persons directly involved for their competence on the subject of GPP.

The setting up of the Management Committee does not make fresh demands or increase the demands on the national budget, either for 2007 or for future years.

The Management Committee may supplement this procedure by further specific methodological or operating requirements, although these will keep to the phases of activity described here and the general principles outlined by the Action Plan.

4.4.3 Description of the procedure

The Action Plan provides for the development of "minimum environmental criteria" for the categories listed in section 3.6 above as well as the categories identified in Article 1(1127) of Law 296/2006 establishing the requirements that, if they are included in the purchasing procedures of the public authorities, will enable the relevant contracts to be classified as "sustainable".

The Management Committee defines an annual programme of work, identifying the categories of supplies, services and works to be tackled, the scheduling for which is based on the maturity of the economic sector under consideration and on the consolidation of the specific normative sources.

For each category to be dealt with under the schedule that has been drawn up, the Ministry of the Environment, with the support of the Agenzia per la Protezione dell'Ambiente (APAT – Agency for Environmental Protection) and, where appropriate, Consip S.p.A., conducts an analysis of the sources and, taking the strategic objectives identified by the National Action Plan into due account, establishes a preliminary spreadsheet setting out the environmental criteria to which details will then be added or on whose basis comparisons will be made. The work of APAT and Consip will not impose an extra burden of expenditure, but will be funded out of existing ordinary resources.

The comparisons of the environmental criteria thus identified will be conducted within the Management Committee and at the same time market analyses will be launched to verify whether products, services and works meeting the selected requirements are in fact available and how widely distributed they are on the market.

If, in the light of the technical and scientific evaluation of the criteria selected, further technical investigation proves necessary, the Ministry of the Environment will promote and launch further comparisons and technical research in conjunction with qualified experts and with the contribution of the production categories concerned.

CONSIP will arrange to share with the Ministry of the Environment the market analysis it is to perform in order to define the environmental characteristics for the commodity categories covered by the Conventions under the Programme of Activities drawn up each year.

The market analyses relating to the other categories and the more detailed research on the market analyses carried out by Consip will be performed by the Ministry of the Environment with the support of APAT.

The proposed minimum environmental criteria selected by the Management Committee will be submitted for comparison, so that the criteria can then be defined.

In the light of the market analysis findings and further investigation, the Management Committee will define a proposal for “minimum environmental criteria” that, as stated in sections 4.2, 4.3 and 5, will be accompanied by methodological and operating instructions for the offices issuing the calls for tenders, as regards the purchasing procedures, together with the targets to be achieved for each category of products, services and works. This proposal will be submitted for comparison to the Standing Working Panel.

Once the comparison has been completed, these “Proposals” will be adopted by the Management Committee and will be drawn up in the form of a technical annex to be adopted by an ad hoc decree of the Minister for the Environment.

5 METHODOLOGICAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR PUBLIC BODIES

5.1 General information for all public bodies

All public bodies are invited to adopt GPP practices in order to encourage the procurement of goods, services and works that are less harmful to the environment and human health.

To ensure that GPP is adopted as a political strategy to be implemented in a steady, gradual manner, all the public authorities referred to in articles 3 and 32 of Legislative Decree 163/2006, principally:

- the central Government authorities (the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Ministries);
- regional and local authorities (the regions, provinces, metropolitan cities, communes, mountain communities);
- public bodies not having an industrial or commercial character, bodies governed by public law and other contracting authorities, such as:
 - agencies of the central Government authorities and the regional authorities (APAT, the Agenzia Regionale per la Protezione dell’Ambiente [ARPA- the Regional Agency for the protection of the environment]);
 - the national and regional park authorities;
 - the universities, research bodies and educational establishments of all types and at all levels;
 - Aziende Sanitarie Locali, Unità Sanitarie Locali – ASL and USL (local health boards, formerly the local health units);
 - central procurement bodies (CONSIP S.P.A., IntercentER, etc.);
 - concessionaires of public services or works;
 - the entities, companies and undertakings supplying local public transport bus services and power and heating distribution and management services;

are invited to proceed as follows:

A) Preliminary analysis

Each procurement agency is asked to conduct a preliminary analysis to assess how to rationalise its requirements, bearing in mind the content of section 3.5 above, “The strategic reference environmental targets for GPP” (for example, which supplies can be dematerialised, which requirements can be met more effectively with a lower environmental impact, which procedures and solutions can be promoted and undertaken in order to avoid the wastage of natural and economic resources).

B) Targets

Each authority is asked to adopt the actions needed in order to meet the targets and abide by the principles of this National Action Plan. In particular, it should draw up a plan documenting the level of application and its own specific objectives.

C) Officers responsible

Within the authority's structure,

- the officers involved in the procurement process who are responsible for the implementation of the National Action Plan may be identified;
- the procedures for attaining the targets set may be determined;
- adequate levels of knowledge and training may be ensured so that officers can perform the duties that will help achieve the environmentally preferable procurement targets.

D) Monitoring

Each authority is asked to monitor the attainment of the preset targets, activating all the improvements required in order to achieve them.

The central authorities will be asked to notify their own central and local bodies of the content of the Action Plan.

5.2 Special requirements for the Regions and local bodies

The Regions are asked to include GPP in their regional and sectoral regulations and to assess:

- the possibility of channelling the financial incentives provided by current law in order to support the tender contracts;
- the introduction of environmental criteria in the process of rationalisation of the procurement of goods, services and works in their own administrative body under the "system of networking" referred to in Article 1(457) of Law 296/2006 (Finance Act 2007) between Consip and the regional centralised procurement agencies;
- direct local bodies towards environmental sustainability criteria in the process of their procurement of goods, services and works.

The provinces and communes are also asked to comply with the content of the National Action Plan by promoting energy efficiency schemes in school building and by including in their purchasing procedures at least the minimum environmental criteria identified as a result of the adoption of this Action Plan.

EMAS registered local bodies with ISO 14001 Certification and/or those that have embarked on the Agenda 21 process are particularly recommended to align their policies and programmes with the targets set by this Action Plan.

6 MANAGEMENT OF THE GPP NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

To guarantee the broadest possible operability and comparison of National Action Plan activities, the establishment of a Management Committee with the functions of operational coordination is planned, as well as a Standing Working Panel in which the parties concerned will participate.

The members of the Management Committee, appointed by an ad hoc decree, are the representative of the Ministry of the Environment, who is the coordinator, and the representatives of the Ministries of Economic Development and of the Economy and Finance, and representatives of the Regions, with the support of reference technical facilities set up by CONSIP, ENEA (Ente per le Nuove Tecnologie, l'Energia e l'Ambiente), APAT and the ARPA system of environmental agencies.

The tasks of the Management Committee are as follows:

- planning the work of defining the minimum environmental criteria;
- formulating proposals for optimising the actions identified by the NAP and for promoting the achievement of the targets set by the NAP (communication, dissemination, training, etc.);
- identifying solutions if critical situations arise in the course of implementation;
- formulating proposals for the conduct of the monitoring and if necessary the revision of the national objectives in the light of the findings from monitoring;
- determining the existing incentives and proposing new incentives;

- formulating proposals for the supplementing of the National Action Plan;
- promoting efforts to disseminate and provide information on the National Action Plan;
- formulating proposals for research and further investigation: LCA, use of supply chain eco-labels, etc.

The functions that the members of the GPP National Action Plan Management Committee are called upon to perform, based on the institutional role of the bodies they represent, are for example:

- Ministry of the Environment and the Protection of Natural Resources: responsibility for coordination
- Ministry of the Economy and Finance: political interlocutor, with which the opportunities of introducing tax incentives or channelling the economic incentives provided by current law under normative or financial measures can be scrutinised; technical interlocutor, in its capacity as the body responsible for the Public Spending Rationalisation Programme, as regards the purchasing of goods and services, for implementing the National Action Plan through the Consip system of conventions;
- Ministry of Economic Development, regarding the potential for synergetic involvement in various spheres, such as the formulation of an Italian strategy that brings in other Integrated Product Policy instruments (LCA and the EPD), possible measures in the energy sector etc.;
- The Regional authorities, in that these are among the first to have followed up on GPP experimental applications, and they may therefore capitalise on their experience;
- APAT and the system of environmental agencies (ARPA), for technical support within the definition of minimum environmental criteria, further methodological research and the evaluation of the environmental effects that emerge from the monitoring data, through the use of appropriate indicators;
- Consip S.p.A., as the national central procurement body, will be called upon to supplement the minimum environmental GPP criteria, where technically possible, and will be the driving force in their dissemination. Consip S.p.A. may also engage in the information and promotion activities, not only by taking part in conferences and seminars but also by its commitment to adding to the information of an environmental nature in the electronic market and to promoting its wider application among user authorities. Consip S.p.A. will also be asked to promote experimental projects that stimulate innovation and R&D, with a view to verifying the feasibility of GPP routes; the findings of those projects may be the foundation for constant improvements to the Plan objectives, as part of the series of revisions;
- ENEA, for technical support, especially for the use of methodological or information instruments that also serve a useful purpose for GPP, such as Life Cycle Assessment and Environmental Product Declarations, and the identification of indicators.

The Management Committee reports to the Ministerial Committee pursuant to article 1(1128) of Law 296/2006 on progress with the NAP and its stated targets.

Within the Management Committee, minimum environmental criteria will be defined according to the procedure described in 4.4 above.

The “Standing Working Panel” is a body with mainly advisory functions; the technical content of the GPP National Action Plan will be presented and pooled, together with the approach to management aspects of communication schemes, training and monitoring methodology. It is to meet periodically when convened by the Ministry of the Environment and the Protection of Natural Resources, to discuss the agenda drawn up by the Ministry. In addition to its advisory functions, it is to perform an active role in the promotion, through its members, of operational support for the implementation of activities planned within the institutional organisation to which they belong.

It will consist of representatives of the following organisations and institutions:

- associations of manufacturers, craft firms and traders,
- trade unions;

- representatives of local bodies and authorities of Coordinamento Agenda 21 Locale, which are active in the GPPNET working group;
- environmental associations;
- consumer associations.

Other competent interlocutors such as other Ministries, trade associations and mandatory supply chain consortia will also be involved in the procedure for determining the minimum environmental criteria for each of the categories tackled.

With particular reference to the parties indicated who are members of the GPP NAP Standing Working Panel, the following are examples of the functions that they should be performing based on their institutional roles:

- Representing the business and industrial world, such as Confindustria, to be involved in the definition of the minimum environmental criteria, which will be joined by the trade associations concerned in individual cases;
- Representing the mandatory consortia to be involved, for the contribution that can be made based on their knowledge of the recycling chains for certain materials;
- Representing local bodies such as the National Association of Italian Communes (ANCI), the Union of Italian Provinces (UPI) and the Conference of the Autonomous Regions and Provinces that are active in the fields of promotion and monitoring. The Conference will also perform the function of promoting schemes in the autonomous regions and provinces in the field of training and awareness, as well as listing the incentives available under current law that might support or promote further sustainable procurement;
- Representing the local bodies through the Coordinamento Agenda 21 GPP working group, whose efforts may include the provision of support with investigating and supplementing the outline guidelines on the environmental criteria for the priority sectors, to be attached to the "minimum environmental criteria", which will also contain a review of any incentives offered under current legislation.
- Representing the system of local public services that are members of Confservizi (the Confederation of providers of community services).

It should be pointed out that no new or additional demand is made on public spending for either the setting up or the operation of the Management Committee and the Standing Working Panel.

7 ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF THE PLAN

7.1 *Communication actions*

The dissemination of GPP among public bodies will depend a good deal on the information and training instruments that are used by the Ministry, in cooperation with the parties involved in the management of the GPP NAP.

In this respect:

- ANCI, UPI, CONSIP S.p.A., Coordinamento A21 Green Procurement working group in particular will be active in the national provision of information on GPP;
- there are plans for the involvement of the regions and, once they are operational, the regional central procurement bodies, in the activities of information, dissemination and training in support of the regional and other local authorities; the regions may avail themselves of the system of environmental agencies.

The Management Committee will agree an annual plan of information schemes, which will in particular include the use of:

1. An internet portal for the provision of information and the promotion of GPP, setting out the minimum environmental criteria, calls for tender and tender specifications containing statements of good practice and documentation on methodology;
2. One or more annual national events to review progress with the application of GPP;
3. Regional-level information events to boost the GPP NAP and publicise the targets of the Plan;
4. Study workshops on subjects associated with priority intervention sectors and the categories for which “minimum environmental criteria” are being identified;
5. A newsletter produced in cooperation with Consip, to be sent out to all the public bodies at regular intervals;
6. Initiatives highlighting “sustainable” products and their suppliers on the market;
7. Initiatives for the pooling of best practices among the parties concerned;
8. Actions targeted at small-sized local bodies.

The financial resources for administering the communication activities amount to €45 000.00 for 2007.

7.2 Training measures

As regards training, the Ministry will liaise with the reference institutional bodies and will learn from the schemes already launched by local bodies or other organisations as regards training in GPP, for example the “GPP School” promoted by the Province of Cremona with the support of the Region of Lombardy and other training ventures undertaken within the Coordinamento A21 Green Procurement working group.

In the training, provision should be made for different levels of detail depending on the bodies to which the subject is being addressed: besides taking account of the size of the public bodies, the training must be in line with the level of implementation of the GPP by the parties on the course, and the degree to which environmentally sustainable procurement is being realised.

Training will be provided within the limits of existing resources and will not make new or further demands on State funding.

7.3 Monitoring

Monitoring will be conducted annually, based on the gathering of data from a representative sample of public bodies (central, regional, provincial and commune authorities and ARPA).

Thought will be given to the advisability of identifying and monitoring a restricted sample for a more detailed assessment of the problems associated with the implementation of the GPP and the effectiveness of measures adopted by the Management Committee.

7.3.1 Monitoring objective

The monitoring should serve to ascertain how closely the national objectives identified by the NAP and the individual objectives for the intervention categories are being achieved. It should also be in line with the indicators being identified by the European Commission.

This data will be useful in highlighting the image of authorities actively involved with GPP and in promoting GPP practices among those who have not embarked on this course of action, as well as making it possible to undertake corrective measures in order to achieve the targets identified by the GPP NAP. In addition, the findings of the annual surveys will also be circulated among economic operators, thus serving as an incentive for them to update their models of production.

The public authorities taking action to implement the NAP will be asked to send the Ministry of the Environment data on their procurement schemes, with a view to an assessment of the indicators identified. In particular, CONSIP S.p.A., through the Ministry of the Economy and Finance, may forward a summary of the data on sustainable procurement by the public authorities, using the e-

procurement instruments developed under the Programme for the rationalisation of public spending on goods and services.

The purpose of this activity will be to verify the degree of penetration of GPP in Italy and the volume of environmental purchasing conducted, one outcome being that it will help to identify and quantify the environmental benefits obtained, to be calculated on the basis of specific indicators (for example, the savings in terms of CO₂ emissions in the light of the ratio between CO₂ and spending in euros).

7.3.2 Procedures for the conduct of monitoring

Monitoring may take the form of sending a questionnaire electronically to a representative sample of entities. The specific procedures for gathering and processing the data will be determined at a later date, within six months of this National Action Plan being approved.

For the purpose of implementing the principle of dematerialisation, the monitoring plan will take into account not only the degree of penetration of GPP in Italy, but also consumption trends.

Consideration will be given to the question of whether it will be possible, and more efficient, to conduct this activity through the public contracts monitoring centre referred to in Article 7 of Legislative Decree 163/2006, whose function it is to collect and process information data on public contracts throughout Italy (calls for tenders and tender notices, awards, successful tenderers).

In addition, in monitoring the Italian situation account will be taken of similar action being taken at the level of the European Commission, where appropriate, aligning the activities in Italy with the Commission methods and time scale so that the findings can be compared with European data.

The financial outlay for monitoring is €5 000.00 for 2007.

8 FINANCIAL COVERAGE OF THE PLAN

8.1 FINANCIAL COVERAGE OF PLAN-RELATED ACTIVITIES

The financial resources required to fund the activities scheduled under the Action Plan for the sustainability of consumption in the Public Authorities sector amount to EUR 50,000 euro for 2007, as provided in Article 1(1126) of Law 296 of 27 December 2006 (Finance Act 2007).

Costs incurred for the activities in excess of that amount will be borne by the parties involved in those activities under the Plan, including APAT and Consip, within the scope of human, instrumental and financial resources available under current law, without further calls on the public purse.