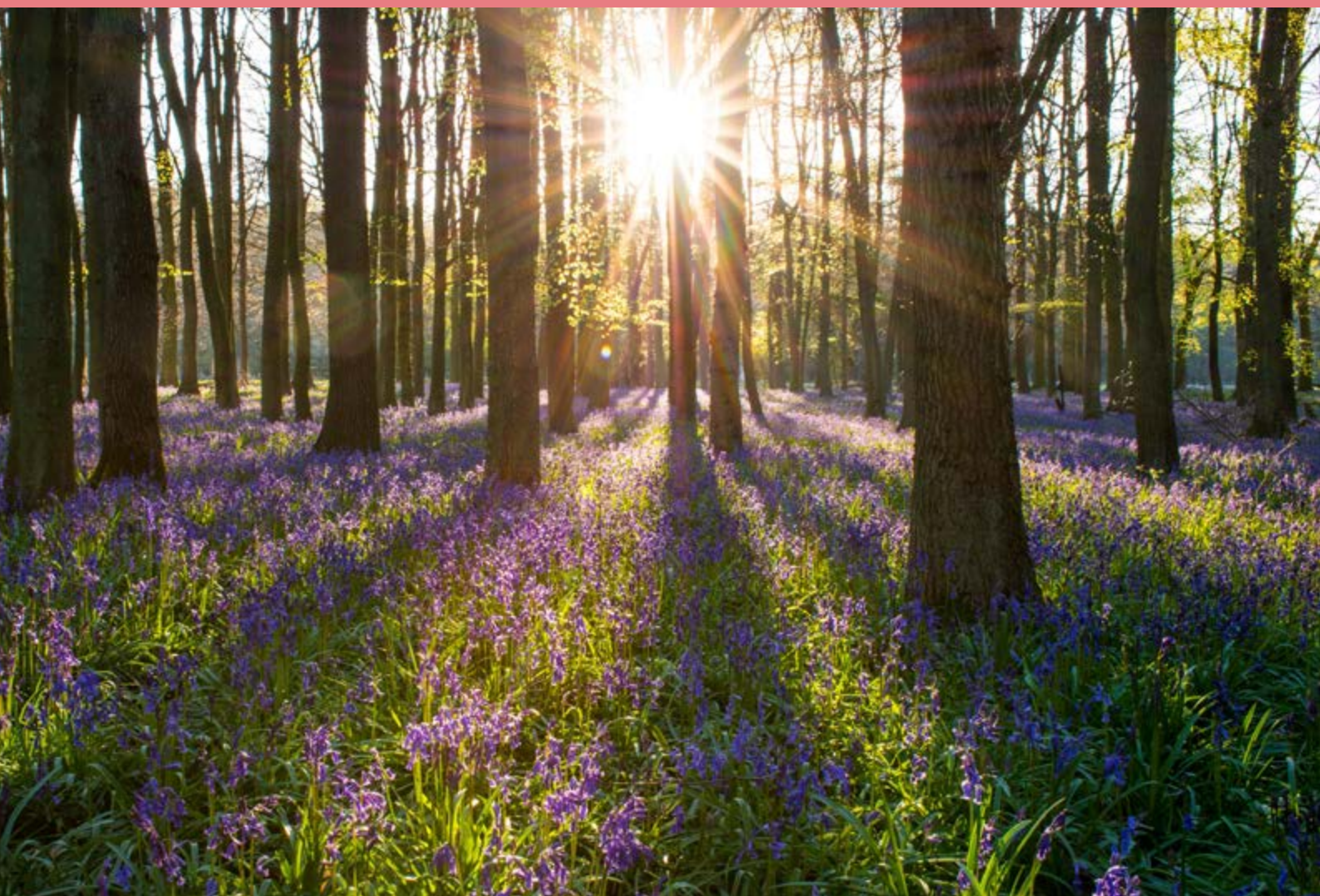
THE RESOURCES AND WASTE STRATEGY AT A GLANCE



Natural capital is one of our most valuable assets. The air we breathe, the water we drink, the land we live on, and the stock of material resources we use in our daily lives are at the heart of our economy, our society and our way of life. We must not take these for granted.

Our Strategy sets out how we will preserve our stock of material resources by minimising waste, promoting resource efficiency and moving towards a circular economy. At the same time we will minimise the damage caused to our natural environment by reducing and managing waste safely and carefully, and by tackling waste crime. It combines actions we will take now with firm commitments for the coming years and gives a clear longer-term policy direction in line with our 25 Year Environment Plan. This is our blueprint for eliminating avoidable[1] plastic waste over the lifetime of the 25 Year Plan, doubling resource productivity, and eliminating avoidable waste of all kinds by 2050.

We want to be ambitious. Where existing legislation cannot match our ambitions, we will take new powers to strengthen it.

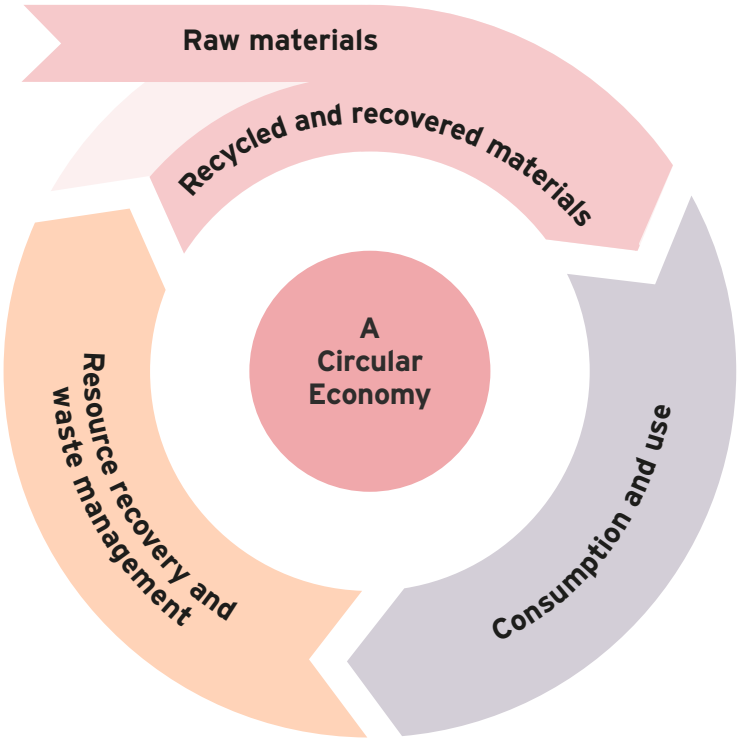
Introduction – The case for action

In the 25 Year Environment Plan, the Government pledged to leave the environment in a better condition for the next generation. This Strategy will help us meet that commitment. It will be supported by a series of consultations on known problem areas, such as packaging waste, and we encourage you to engage with us in delivering this strategy by sharing your views.

Our plan is to become a world leader in using resources efficiently and reducing the amount of waste we create as a society. We want to prolong the lives of the materials and goods that we use, and move society away from the inefficient 'linear' economic model of 'take, make, use, throw'.

A more circular economy will see us keeping resources in use as long as possible, so we extract maximum value from them. We should recover and regenerate products and materials whenever we can, giving them a new lease of life.

1 We talk about plastic waste being 'avoidable' when the plastic could have been reused or recycled; when a reusable or recyclable alternative could have been used instead; or when it could have been composted or biodegraded in the open environment



Chapter 1 – Sustainable production

During the first stage of the resources lifecycle, we turn valuable natural resources and materials into the goods and services upon which modern life and a healthy, vibrant economy depend. Evidence suggests that 80% of the damage inflicted upon the environment when products become waste can be avoided if more thoughtful decisions are made at the production stage[2].

This chapter sets out how we will:

- **Invoke the 'polluter pays' principle and extend producer responsibility for packaging, ensuring that producers pay the full costs of disposal for packaging they place on the market**
- **Stimulate demand for recycled plastic by introducing a tax on plastic packaging with less than 30% recycled plastic**
- **Harness the potential of extended producer responsibility for other product types**
- **Set minimum requirements through ecodesign to encourage resource efficient product design**
- **Manage chemicals sustainably and address barriers to reuse and recycling posed by their use, through a Chemicals Strategy**
- **Develop a model for realising resource efficiency savings, working with businesses through 'resource efficiency clusters'**

2 WRAP (2013) http://www.wrap.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/Embedding%20sustainability%20in%20design%20%20-%20final%20v1.pdf

Chapter 2 – Helping consumers take more considered actions

Helping consumers choose and use more sustainable products, is both good for them and the environment. Despite advances in technology in recent decades, the average life span of many products we buy and use in daily life is actually lower than it was 20 years ago[3]. We want to extend the lives of products through repair, reuse and remanufacture. We want to help consumers to be able to recycle the materials they contain and dispose of them in the most environmentally sensitive ways.

This chapter sets out how we will:

- **Incentivise consumers to purchase sustainably**
- **Provide consumers with better information on the sustainability of their purchases**
- **Ban plastic products where there is a clear case for it and alternatives exist**
- **Address barriers to reuse**
- **Support the market for remanufactured goods**
- **Encourage appropriate disposal of used products**
- **Lead by example though procurement and the Greening Government Commitments**

Chapter 3 – Resource recovery and waste management

Household waste recycling rates in England have risen from around 11% in 2000/1 to about 45%[4]. Recycling rates in construction have also improved over the same period[5]. But since 2013 rates for both have plateaued. We need to drive better quantity and quality in recycling, and more investment in domestic recycled materials markets. This government supports comprehensive and frequent waste collections and is determined to help local authorities and waste management companies act in the most sustainable and resource-efficient way possible. We want to promote UK-based recycling and export less waste to be processed abroad.

This chapter sets out how we will:

- **Improve recycling rates by ensuring a consistent set of dry recyclable materials is collected from all households and businesses**
- **Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from landfill by ensuring that every householder and appropriate businesses have a weekly separate food waste collection, subject to consultation**
- **Improve urban recycling rates, working with business and local authorities**

3 The German Environment Agency (2017) https://www.umweltbundesamt.de/en/press/pressinformation/lifetime-of-electrical-appliances-becoming-shorter

4 Local authority collected waste from households from January 2010 to March 2018. (https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/env18-local-authority-collected-waste-annual-results-tables)

5 UK Government services and information (2018) https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-waste-data

- **Improve working arrangements and performance between local authorities**
- **Drive greater efficiency of Energy from Waste (EfW) plants**
- **Address information barriers to the use of secondary materials**
- **Encourage waste producers and managers to implement the waste hierarchy in respect to hazardous waste**

Chapter 4 – Tackling waste crime

Waste-related criminal activity costs the economy hundreds of millions of pounds per year[6]. Rogue operators illegally dump or export waste, undermining legitimate businesses by disposing of waste cheaply and recklessly. This deprives the economy of tax income and harms the environment and local communities. By tackling this crime we will ensure that resources are properly recycled or recovered and fed back into the economy.

This chapter sets out how we will:

- **Improve the transport, management and description of waste by reforming existing regulations**
- **Strengthen intelligence sharing and engagement to tackle illegal activity**
- **Prevent illegal activity being hidden through waste exemptions by reforming the existing regime**
- **Mandate the digital recording of waste movements, subject to consultation**
- **Create a Joint Unit for Waste Crime**
- **Toughen penalties for waste criminals**
- **Increase awareness of waste regulations and publicise positive work of enforcement bodies as they tackle waste crime**

Chapter 5 – Enough is enough: cutting down on food waste

We have long recognised the need to tackle food waste. In the UK alone, an estimated 10 million tonnes of food and drink are wasted post-farm gate annually, worth around **£20 billion**. Excess food waste costs us money and is environmentally damaging. Growing excess food that no one eats damages the Earth's ecosystems when we dispose of it. Moreover, a fifth of UK greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are associated with food and drink, mostly created during production (agriculture and manufacturing) – and needlessly if the food and drink are wasted[7]. We are fully committed to reducing food waste, reducing our carbon footprint, and also meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goal to halve global food waste at consumer and retail levels by 2030.

6 DEFRA - Rethinking Waste Crime (2018) https://consult.defra.gov.uk/waste/crime-and-poor-performance-in-the-waste-sector/supporting_documents/Waste_Crime_Cons_English.pdf

7 WRAP (2016) http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/environment-food-and-rural-affairs-committee/food-waste/written/38003.html .

This chapter sets out how we will:

- **More effectively redistribute food to those who need it most before it can go to waste**
- **Consult on annual reporting of food surplus and waste by food businesses**
- **Consult on legal powers to introduce food waste targets and surplus food redistribution obligations**
- **Publish a new food surplus and waste hierarchy**
- **Promote awareness of the issue by appointing a new food waste champion**
- **Support cross sector collaboration through the Courtauld 2025 agreement**

Chapter 6 – Global Britain: international leadership

Concerns over resources and waste management cut across continents and oceans. Pollution and environmental damage do not respect national borders and tackling them requires a broad coalition. Plastic which pollutes the ocean can be carried by currents and cause damage far from where it originated: there is little to be gained by making improvements in isolation. International leadership is needed.

This chapter sets out how we will:

- **Promote the goals of our Resources and Waste Strategy internationally**
- **Drive international political commitments through the ground-breaking Commonwealth Clean Oceans Alliance**
- **Support developing nations to tackle pollution and reduce plastic waste, including through UK aid**
- **Improve the quality of plastics exported for recycling through the Basel and Stockholm Conventions**
- **Establish cross-government oversight of the UK's natural resource security**

Chapter 7: Research and innovation

In some areas where we are seeking transformative change, our knowledge, data or technology has yet to match the breadth of our ambitions. Innovation here is vital – both to developing novel solutions and improving the efficiency, cost and/or effectiveness of existing technologies. As Government, we can support industry and academia to stimulate innovation.

This chapter sets out how we will:

- **Support further investment and innovation in resource efficiency, working with UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) on our Areas of Research Interest**
- **Launch a call for evidence on the development of standards for bio-based and biodegradable plastics**
- **Support further investment in resource efficient technologies, including through the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund**
- **Support the Waste and Resources Action Programme**
- **Encourage innovative waste treatment technologies that create transport fuels through the Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation (RTFO)**

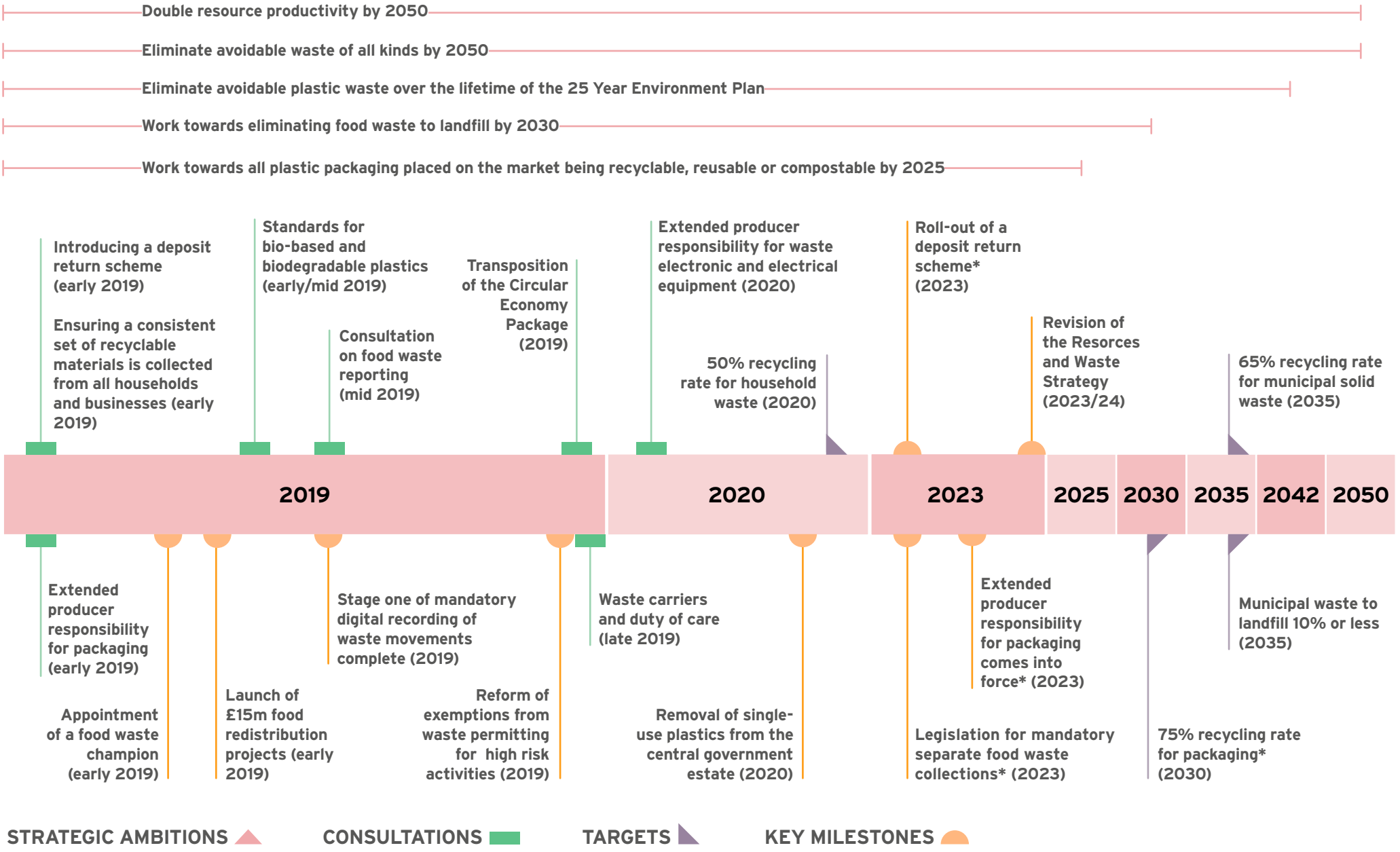
Chapter 8 – Measuring progress: data, monitoring and evaluation

High quality data, information and insights are essential for effective policy making.

This chapter sets out how we will:

- **Work with our partners and stakeholders to develop a shared vision and bold new approach to data on resources and waste**
- **Move away from weight-based towards impact-based targets and reporting, focusing initially on carbon and natural capital accounting**
- **Maintain the coverage and quality of local authority-collected waste and improve data collection to meet future needs**
- **Work with tech firms to develop innovative digital solutions for tracking waste, and consult on options to mandate the digital recording and sharing of waste movement data**

KEY MILESTONES



*subject to consultation