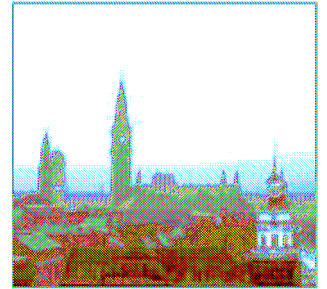


A municipal strategy

København, Denmark

Previous chapters have described single steps towards green purchasing. In all cases, these steps have not been isolated activities, but part of a coordinated process. Especially in bigger municipalities a thought-out strategy is needed to implement the full potential of green purchasing. The next chapter will describe how the City of København met this challenge.



City of København, Denmark

Background

The Municipality of København employs approximately 40,000 people, about 1,200 of them having purchasing authority and spending 400 million Euro annually on goods and services. Purchasing is characterised by a central purchasing department contracting purchase agreements on the one hand, but on the other, decentralised structures can also be found in that a series of purchases are undertaken outside the purchase agreements in individual institutions.

In 1992, København prepared a purchasing regulation calling upon all municipal buyers to consider environmental aspects when purchasing, which proved not always to be the case at that time. In order to create the overall framework for greening its purchases København adopted a purchasing policy, which partly centralises the purchases and partly demands the integration of environmental and energy concerns, as outlined in Box 12.

Environmentally correct purchasing basically involves choosing products that, from a life cycle perspective, affect the environment the least possible. This means that the Municipality of København chooses products and services that:

- are produced in the most environmentally friendly way possible
- are distributed in the most environmentally friendly way possible
- cause the least possible damage to the environment
- can be removed in the most environmentally friendly way possible
- involve ethical considerations in their choice

Suppliers chosen should have an internal environmental policy for the company - and preferably an actual environmental certification such as EMAS or ISO 14001.

Environmental considerations normally require selecting those products which fulfil the requirements of one of the publicly controlled environmental and energy labels (The Swan, The Flower, Blauer Engel and EU energy label). As for product areas which are not covered by environmental label criteria, the environmental impact of the product is assessed to the extent possible via the Environmental Protection Agency guides or information and guidance from other sources.

Box 12: Purchasing policy of the Municipality of København regarding environmental issues



Selecting areas of effort

In September 1998, this green purchasing policy was put into effect via a plan of action, which in a first step only covered the København Energy, Water and Environmental Protection Agency. The aim of the plan was to launch a process, which ensured taking into account environmental requirements systematically when purchasing goods and services, on equal terms with traditional requirements like quality, reliability of delivery and price.

With its intention to properly anchor a philosophy of environmental purchasing, which would serve as a basis for the incorporation of more complex problems, the plan of action set about identifying easily accessible areas of effort, where less environmentally harmful products should particularly be procured. The criteria for choosing those areas were the following:

- Knowledge of the environmental impact of the product is available.
- Less environmentally harmful products are available.
- Environmental effects can be achieved.
- The large quantities ordered have a potential to influence the market.
- The effort is visible to citizens, enterprises and/or staff.
- The effort is quantifiable.

As areas of effort to serve as a model for the incorporation of green purchasing in all other areas, København selected the following fields: electronic products, office supplies, cables and pipes, transport and maintenance of buildings.

Defining concrete targets

For each area of effort, concrete targets to be met within two years were outlined. They can be seen in Table 4.

	Goods/ Products	Targets
Electronic Products	Computers	An institution jointly replacing more than 10% of its computers or undertaking purchases to a corresponding extent should take care that the computers purchased belong to the 10% of the least environmentally damaging brands in terms of production and that they operate at the lowest energy consumption standard available. Finally, it should be possible to dismantle the computers after use in order to recycle them / their materials.
	Printers	All printers are required to perform double-sided printing and should fulfil the state-of-the-art minimum performance demands for printers.
	Photocopiers	All photocopiers are required to use 100% recycled paper and should fulfil the state-of-the-art minimum performance demands for photocopiers.



Office supplies	In general	All office supplies have to be PVC-free. No organic solvents in office supplies.
	Paper	Paper and stationery should be unbleached and consist of 100% recycled paper. Paper for photocopiers unable to use 100% recycled paper has to contain at least 50% recycled fibres.
	Ring binders and magazine cassettes	At least 50% of ring binders and magazine cassettes have to be made of recycled cardboard.
	Toner	All toner cassettes have to be reused. All inkjet cassettes have to be reused.
Cables/ Pipes		All cables purchased have to be PVC-free. Purchasing PVC-free cables, however, should not considerably reduce the competitive power of the institution and may not lead to significant additional expenses. After January 1, 2005, however, all cables purchased have to be PVC-free. All pipes purchased have to be PVC-free under the precondition that less environmentally damaging substitutes exist. Purchasing PVC-free pipes, however, should not considerably reduce the competitive power of the institution and may not lead to significant additional expenses. After January 1, 2005, however, all pipes purchased have to be PVC-free.
Goods/ Products		Targets
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of means of transport (cars, trucks, electric cars, bicycles). • Fuel consumption and main maintenance of the means of transport. • Transport associated with work, inspection and meeting activities. • Transport when on official journeys. 	Specifically damaging means of transport are pointed out in order to achieve rapid effects. A survey of the environmental damage caused by the existing fleet should be conducted and the modal split during working hours should be ascertained. Furthermore, the survey should give an idea of which means of transport are used on official journeys. The survey should point out effort areas likely to produce significant environmental effects as a result of environmentally concerned purchasing.
Building maintenance		No specific targets

Involving staff

In order to support the implementation of the project, a task group consisting of a coordinator with professional environmental knowledge and a representative (purchaser) from each institution was appointed. Its role was to point out areas of effort, establish targets, gather experiences, arrange thematic meetings, communicate information about environmental considerations when purchasing and undertake documentation of the enterprise within the area. Its strength lies in the management of a forum for handling tasks shared by institutions.



Providing training

Training was provided in order for staff to learn how to think and act environmentally consciously in the field of purchasing.

All staff engaged in purchasing attended a two-day course in order to learn how to formulate environmental and energy demands and which tools to apply in everyday environmental work. Thematic meetings (duration 2-4 hours) were held for purchasers who are in charge of more technically related activities.

Documenting approaches

To make their daily work easier, central purchasers can find information in 50 purchase guides prepared by the Danish Environmental Protection Agency (DEPA). The guides contain a series of product-specific environmental demands based on life cycle assessment. Also available are environmental check forms for transport and building maintenance prepared by the task group and a general environmental questionnaire for the evaluation of products and manufacturers.

Monitoring results

Purchases within the effort areas are evaluated in relation to the targets established, which have to be fulfilled in January 2001. Table 5 shows that fulfilment rates vary both at the institutional and product level. Experiences show that green purchasing is most easily implemented via a centralised purchasing structure because this eases staff training and continuous communication.

Fulfilment of targets, year 1999	Computers	Printers	Copiers	Paper	Ring binders and magazine cassettes	Toner cassettes	Cables	Pipes
Fulfilment rate	100%	9%	100%	30%	11%	100%	63%	93%

Table 5: Target fulfilment rates of the green purchasing objectives, København, 1999

The degree of success of introducing environmentally concerned purchasing additionally depends on the employees' motivation and knowhow of the

environmental effects of products. To ensure a systematic incorporation of the green purchasing routine, the staff has to be provided with clear signals concerning the areas of priority and the mandatory character of the operation.



Barriers and conflicts

The wide and varied range of potential suppliers for a special product increases the workload of the purchaser, who has to gather environmental information and can only get a quite superficial idea of the general environmental trend of suppliers. In order to reduce this workload, the task group has agreed with the suppliers that they deliver environmental information about all products bought during the previous year. This should also help to solve the documentation problem raised by the range of purchasers being so wide.

The future

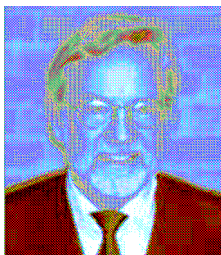
Introducing environmentally concerned purchasing in the entire municipality also requires the commitment of the over 1,000 employees who undertake purchases outside the purchasing agreements. In order to achieve this goal, København will centralise purchases by falling back on the use of framework agreements, including environmental and energy concerns. Thus, purchasers can do without demanding environmental requirements from suppliers. The purchasers will specify those agreements in co-operation with the Environmental Control, which possesses the environmental know-how.

København will additionally work on a definition of clear-cut targets, which cannot be misinterpreted by purchasers and allow their degree of implementation to be documented. Information on environmentally acceptable products will be provided via the Intranet.

Transferability

The Copenhagen model is based on a philosophy of having an “Action Plan” with political commitment at the highest municipal level. It is crucial for the responsible purchasing unit to have access to many municipal players. Green purchasing with clear politically approved targets is easier to administrate though it might still be difficult to reach the targets. The use of framework agreements with suppliers complies better with a centralised than with a decentralised local purchasing structure.

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