

How we care for the environment

Unilever Environmental
Performance 2000



Exploring

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Making a positive contribution

This is an overview of our environmental performance.
For more information about Unilever and the environment
see www.unilever.com – environment and society section.

Through consumer use of our products and by investing, training, and innovating we make a positive contribution to society. But our activity goes beyond this. It extends to direct involvement in communities as a concerned corporate citizen. Throughout the world our companies are engaged in a myriad of small and large projects aimed at, for example, raising standards of education, or programmes which improve health, welfare and the environment. (The detail is on our website at www.unilever.com).

Our consumers trust us to supply them with high quality goods that are produced and can be consumed in an environmentally and socially responsible way. We have a clear responsibility to meet the expectation that we should perform successfully as a business and accept responsibility for our actions around the world. This is very much part of the reality of doing business today and we are eager to find profitable solutions to the challenges.

Our environmental impact is most significant in the areas of water use, fisheries and agriculture. In each case, we are working with others in various countries and regions on conservation and sustainability projects – seeking to align our economic goals with the social and environmental consequences of our work.

This environmental performance report and the information we provide on our web pages are a manifestation of our commitment to be open and transparent. You will get a snapshot of our performance from the following pages, but we strongly urge you to look at the detail behind the data and the essential human stories that bring our environmental work to life. You will find that and much more at Unilever.com.

We are particularly pleased that our data reporting – started in 1993 – has improved in terms of its completeness and overall quality, and now demonstrates in hard facts how Unilever companies throughout the world have continuously raised their environmental performance by reducing their overall impact (see page 3).

We have met, or are on track to meet, all but one of our demanding targets set in our Environment Report 1998 (see page 8). In many ways such progress is the easy part. We have now moved on to a far more complex job of making environmental improvements in areas outside manufacturing – working with our product designers, suppliers and customers. In short, this will mean continuing to improve our manufacturing performance, designing environmentally superior products, and working with our suppliers and customers to reduce impacts along the supply chain. We have now widened our environment programme to address these factors.

We have great opportunities here to become more efficient, not only in financial terms but also in the natural resources we use and in those subsequently used by our consumers. If we get this right – as we intend to do – it will be good for the environment and good for our business. Follow our progress on www.unilever.com.

Chairmen's statement



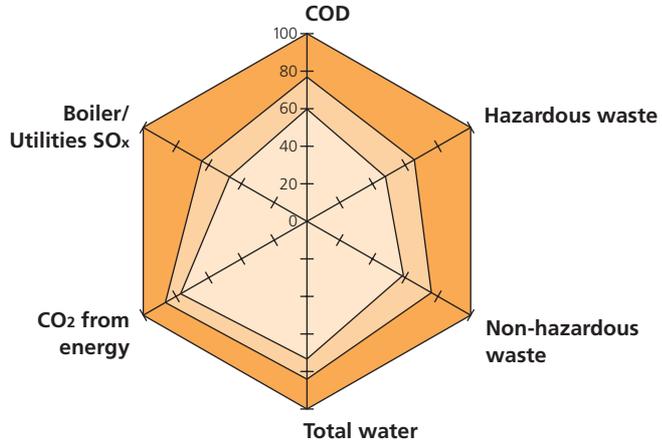
Antony Burgmans

Niall FitzGerald

Chairmen of Unilever

Reduction in load/tonne of production – expressed as % of 1996 value – and target for 2004

- 1996 actual
- 1999 actual
- 2004 target



Note

Throughout this document, our last reported data (1996) are the baseline for the 1999 targets, and 1999 data are the baseline for 2004 targets.

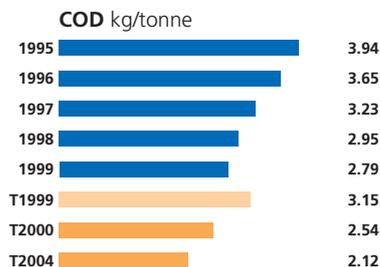
Manufacturing environmental performance data – loads per tonne of production

	Total business unit	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
COD	Kg/tonne	3.94	3.65	3.23	2.95	2.79
Hazardous waste	Kg/tonne	0.69	0.96	0.98	0.66	0.62
Non-hazardous waste	Kg/tonne	23.68	17.58	17.46	14.86	13.12
Total water	m ³ /tonne	7.94	7.21	6.79	6.54	6.06
Energy	GJ/tonne	2.91	2.83	2.69	2.57	2.40
CO₂ from energy use	Kg/tonne	247.63	243.61	226.47	217.59	208.49
Boiler/Utilities SO_x	Kg/tonne	0.68	0.71	0.59	0.55	0.45

Summary of Unilever manufacturing environmental performance

Improvements in the environmental performance of our manufacturing operations worldwide since 1995 are shown here. The diagram shows percentage improvement since 1996 (our last reported data) and the target reduction for 2004. The actual figures in loads per tonne are in the table. See page 6 for why we use these parameters. Find more data on the [detailed data pages](#) at Unilever.com

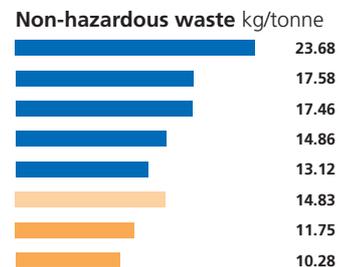
Unilever manufacturing environmental performance 1995-1999 and targets: reduction in load/tonne of production



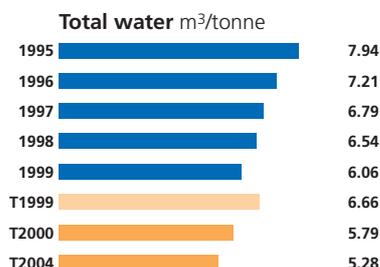
HPC factories in the USA contributed to overall reductions by making major improvements in 1999. The number of sites reporting COD has increased to nearly 97% (as % of production).



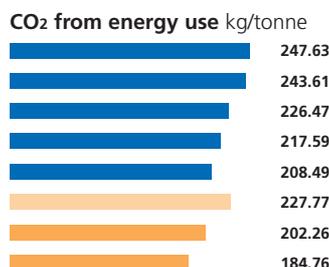
Sites in the UK and South Africa made significant improvements. Other contributors were the closure of some older sites (e.g. in Turkey), reclassification of waste by some local authorities, and improvements in measuring and reporting.



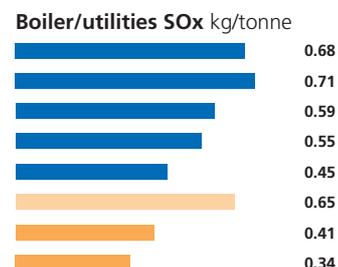
Recycling of edible oil bleaching earth and reducing the amount of liquid effluent taken offsite by tanker have contributed significantly to the falling trend. A better understanding of waste recycling on our plantations has also helped improve measurement and reporting.



Major improvements have come from a focus on those sites that consume a lot of water because of the products they make. More information: see [water care](http://www.unilever.com) at Unilever.com



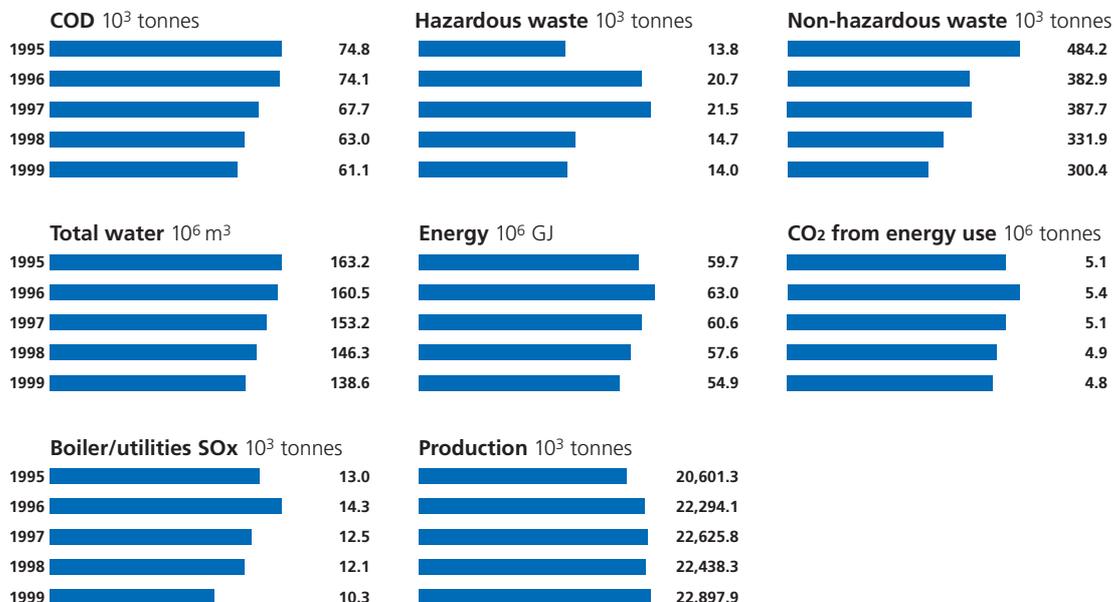
Energy conservation programmes by our sites in some countries, such as India, have led to a significant reduction in CO₂ emissions, beating our target figure for 1999. There were also some improvements to the accuracy of measuring and reporting.



Many sites have changed boiler fuel from oil to gas (Chile, Argentina, Austria, Malaysia, Spain, Belgium, Greece). Sites in India and Brazil have moved to fuel with a lower sulphur content.

Key performance trends

Here are the trends in our key performance parameters. For discussions on the issues and details of the actions we have taken to reduce our impact visit the [responding to global issues](http://www.unilever.com) section at Unilever.com

Unilever environmental performance 1995-1999: production tonnage and total loads

Environmental prosecutions and fines 1995-1999

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Number of manufacturing sites	444	506	534	495	449
Number of sites reporting	400	457	502	473	449
Number of fines	16	9	25	16	2
Total cost of fines	£203,641	£74,005	£41,577	£31,066	£3,022

After a rise in 1997 (mainly due to multiple prosecutions at two factories), the number of prosecutions and the amount of fines have continued to decrease. Most incidents were relatively minor technical infringements. Our aim remains total compliance.

Environmental impact

Unilever companies have reduced their overall impact on the environment (total loads) while increasing their output (production tonnage).

The parameters we use***Total COD (Chemical Oxygen Demand, tonnes)***

COD represents the ingredients and product lost from the full manufacturing process, and mainly arises during cleaning operations. COD is widely used by regulatory bodies to control industrial wastewaters, and to calculate the correct level of charges for downstream municipal wastewater treatment, which is designed to remove most of the COD before the wastewater is discharged to the environment. The Unilever COD data represent the load discharged from the factory, and does not make any allowance for the fact that typically between 80% and 90% of this material is removed in municipal wastewater treatment plants. Consequently the COD load which actually reaches the environment, and therefore contributes to nitrification potential, is much lower.

Total hazardous and non-hazardous waste (tonnes) (reported separately)

In terms of potential impact on the environment, it is important to distinguish between hazardous and non-hazardous waste. Since there is no common international waste classification, the Unilever data are based on the national legal definitions applicable for each site, and are simply the total mass of material disposed of from the site under each classification.

Boiler/Utilities SO_x (tonnes)

This air emission parameter is relevant to most sites since almost all have a boiler used for generating steam. In some cases diesel generators are also used onsite for electricity generation. The Unilever data are calculated from the total mass of fuel consumed, and its sulphur content, and are expressed in terms of a mass of sulphur dioxide (SO₂). Emissions of SO_x contribute to acid rain potential.

Total energy consumption (GJ or 10⁹ Joules)/CO₂ from energy use (tonnes)

Energy consumption per tonne of product is widely used as a manufacturing performance indicator. The global warming potential (expressed as tonnes CO₂) has then been calculated from the source energy data using internationally accepted conversion factors derived from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the International Energy Agency (IEA).

Total water consumption (m³)

Water consumption is also widely used as a measure of manufacturing performance. It is measured universally in Unilever's factories. The Unilever data represent all water consumed and include water used as an ingredient in products as well as uncontaminated cooling water and wastewater.

Data parameters

Six key environmental performance parameters are used by our manufacturing operations for reporting emissions and setting future reduction targets.

Improvements have been achieved by:

- Devolving responsibility for the process to the Business Groups (BGs) and providing training for BG personnel in their new role in terms of collecting and validating the environmental performance data
- Improving the proforma used for collecting data. This has improved validation and provided greater consistency
- Faster input of data to our database and providing better reporting tools to the BGs and for external reporting.

For the 1999 data collection exercise this has resulted in all sites reporting – a considerable improvement when compared with our last Report. Except for one parameter, virtually complete reporting of the key parameters was achieved – in excess of 99% based on reported tonnage. Reporting of COD data was slightly lower with 97% coverage being achieved on the same basis. Furthermore, the whole process has been greatly speeded up, allowing for much earlier reporting of the aggregated data.

Quality of our data

Considerable improvements have been made in the collection and validation of the environmental performance data from our sites worldwide over the past two years.

**Targets included in
the 1998 Unilever
Environment Report**

Target	Performance	Comment	
Environmental Management Systems			
90% of Unilever manufacturing sites* audited by the end of 1999	Target met	*applies to sites owned by Unilever for more than a year	
100% of Unilever manufacturing sites* audited by the end of 2000	On track	*applies to sites owned by Unilever for more than a year	
All site and Company environmental managers to be trained by the end of 1998	Not met	While the figure improved in 1999 (78% trained) many managers moved jobs, making it virtually impossible to meet the target, which has been revised (see Environmental Programme – Future Objectives, page 10).	
All DiverseyLever audit groups trained by Q1 1998	Target met		
All DiverseyLever sites reviewed by June 1998	Target met		
All DiverseyLever European sites to achieve ISO 14001 certification by the end of 2000	On track		
Eco-efficiency targets		Target Reduction %	Actual Reduction %
Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD)	Target met	13.7	23.7
Hazardous Waste	Target met	21.0	35.8
Non-hazardous Waste	Target met	15.7	25.4
Total Water	Target met	7.6	16.0
Energy	Target met	6.5	15.4
Boiler SOx	Target met	7.3	36.0
Sustainability and other targets			
Develop initiative to promote sustainable agriculture	Target met	Developed set of 10 indicators for sustainable agriculture. Published brochure. Started extensive engagement process.	
Apply Life Cycle Assessment best practice in the key product categories by the end of 1998 and identify improvement opportunities	Target met	Examples of where this has been applied are for tea, frozen vegetables, ice cream, margarine, and tomato-based sauces.	

Progress against targets

We have met, or are on target to meet, all but one of the targets set out in Unilever's Environment Report 1998.

Caring for resources

1 Sustainable agriculture

Two-thirds of our raw materials come from agriculture. We are working with a wide group of stakeholders around the world to develop a set of standards for sustainable agriculture. These standards will include and expand on our existing careful practices and we are seeking ways to provide better consumer information about how the ingredients in our products are grown.

2 Fish conservation

We are committed only to buy fish from sustainable stocks by 2005 and we are working with suppliers to meet this target. We have invited suppliers to observe a code developed by the German fish industry that promotes sustainable fishing, and to date some 90% of our suppliers have signed the code. We also work with the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) to encourage suppliers to move towards certification to MSC standards.

3 Water care

The world's water systems – a shared resource – are under intense pressure. Consumers need clean water to use our products. Agriculture, which needs water for plants to grow, can also affect water quality as well as availability. Our factories use water for processing, and produce effluent that must be cleaned before it is discharged to rivers and seas. Unilever is working with others to help assure the future availability of clean, potable water. Central to this are projects to recover and conserve natural water resources and partnerships to build and share knowledge about efficient management and protection of water quality.

For greater detail, visit the [caring for our resources](#) pages at [Unilever.com](#).

Contributing to a sustainable environment

Many of the issues that affect us are outside our direct control – either at the beginning of the supply chain or at the end. This has led us to focus our improvement efforts on three environmental sustainability initiatives that go beyond our own operations.

Our aims are:

- Eco-efficiency in the supply chain

To continually reduce our environmental impact in manufacturing as shown on page 5 and on the [detailed data pages](#) at Unilever.com and extend the scope of reported parameters internally and to aspects of the wider supply chain.

- Eco-efficiency in innovation

To incorporate eco-efficiency in product design by extending the application of life cycle assessment and developing new tools for use by product developers.

- Sustainable resource use

To source all fish from sustainable sources by 2005.

To define standards for sustainable agriculture based on the findings from our pilot projects on peas, spinach, tea, tomatoes and vegetable oil.

To define our water imprint on a regional and product category basis and use this in developing partnership programmes for clean water stewardship.

In addition we will use our environmental management system (EMS) to provide a basis for our sites to gain ISO 14001 certification – with the goal of ensuring our major manufacturing sites achieve this. Furthermore we will extend our EMS to cover all non-manufacturing parts of the operation. As part of this activity we will ensure that all managers nominated as responsible for implementing Unilever environmental standards receive appropriate formal training, and that any new environmental managers receive such training within six months of their appointment.

Our action plan in response to specific environmental themes can be found in the [responding to global issues](#) section at Unilever.com.

Environment programme – future objectives

Our environment policy applies to all our operations throughout the world. During 1999 we reviewed our environment strategy and outlined our programme for the next two to three years.

Verifier's Statement

Enviros Aspinwall has subjected the data contained in this document to an independent assessment. The assessment included visits to 23 operational sites that collectively accounted for 13% of Unilever's total production tonnage in 1999.

We reviewed the system for collection of data, including the level of compliance with internal reporting guidelines, and have found this system to be robust. The evidence we observed during the site visits corroborates the reported improvements in environmental performance.

Our [full statement](#) can be found at Unilever.com.



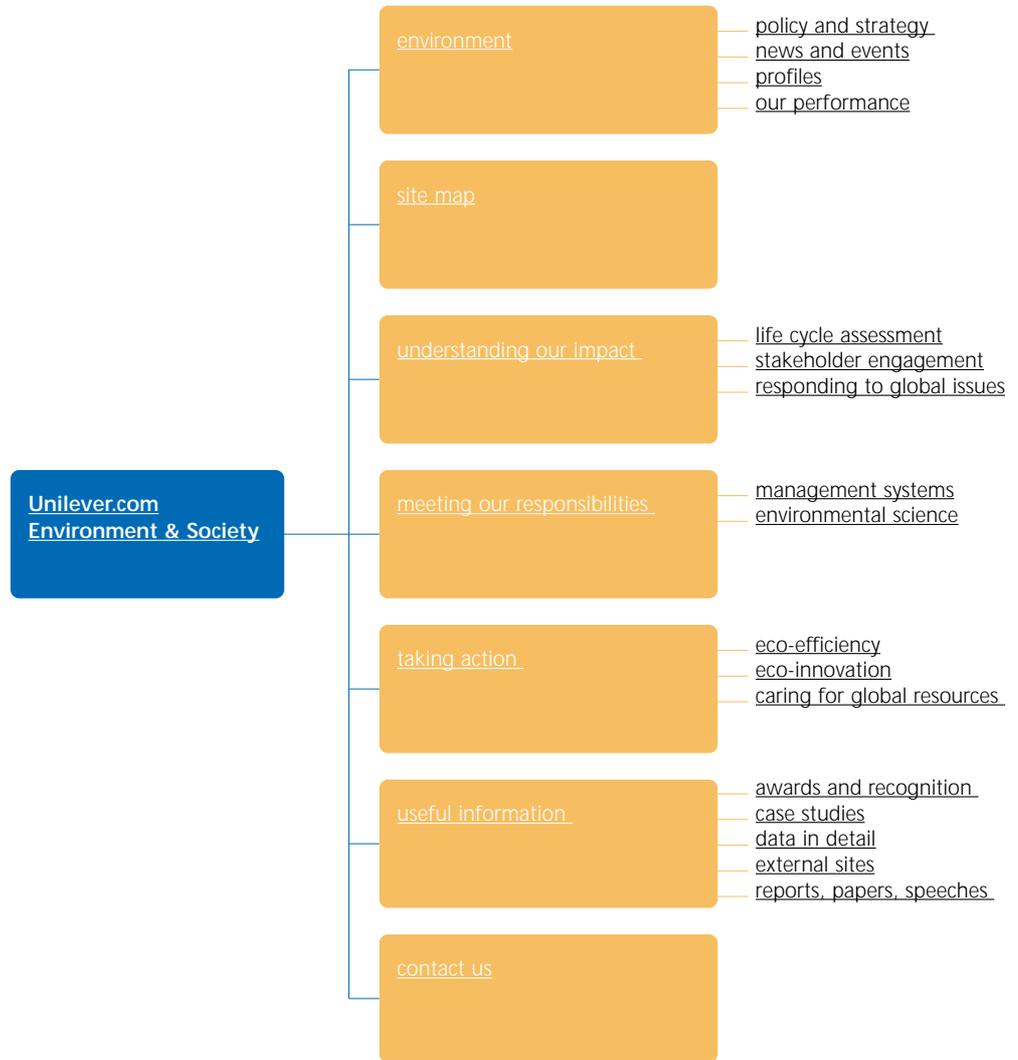
Mark Line

Projects Director – Reporting and Verification
July 2000

Aspinwall & Company Ltd
Walford Manor
Shrewsbury SY4 2HH
UK

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knowledge innovation solutions

Verifier's statement



Site Map