

# Sweden's environmental quality objectives – the situation in brief

OBJECTIVE	Forecast for 2020	Trend	Factors affecting the assessment
1. Reduced Climate Impact*			To meet this objective, global greenhouse gas emissions must begin to fall within 10–15 years, be halved by 2050 and be close to zero by 2100. Emissions worldwide grew by 25% between 1990 and 2005, and are expected to go on rising for the next 20–30 years.
2. Clean Air			Causes of air pollution include road transport, wear of road surfaces by studded tyres, wood-fired heating, shipping and mobile machinery. In 2020, pollutants will still adversely affect health and the environment. The trend towards better air quality in towns has not been maintained.
3. Natural Acidification Only			Land-based sulphur and nitrogen emissions in Europe have fallen sharply, but not enough. Factors behind the decrease in Sweden include the sulphur tax and vehicle exhaust standards. Shipping emissions are rising. More intensive forestry could exacerbate acidification.
4. A Non-Toxic Environment			Diffuse releases of dangerous substances from products and processes are difficult to control. Production volumes are rising, especially in countries with limited regulation of chemicals. Prospects of cleaning up contaminated sites posing acute risks are judged to have improved.
5. A Protective Ozone Layer			This objective is judged to be achievable. Thanks to international cooperation, levels of ozone-depleting substances are falling. To complete its phase-out of these substances, Sweden needs to ban HCFCs. The trend is positive, with ozone layer thickness fairly constant since 2002.
6. A Safe Radiation Environment			Radioactive emissions are limited. Disposal options for certain radioactive wastes have still to be developed. Changing human behaviour so as to reduce skin cancer incidence is difficult. Risks associated with electromagnetic fields are being studied and, where necessary, addressed.
7. Zero Eutrophication			Swedish emissions of phosphorus compounds and nitrogen compounds, including ammonia, have fallen. The majority of nutrient inputs to seas and forest soils originate in other countries. Recovery of natural ecosystems will take a long time.
8. Flourishing Lakes and Streams			Greater consideration for aquatic environments is needed in farming and forestry. Efforts to conserve cultural and natural environments need to be stepped up. Conditions for ecological restoration have improved. Water supply plans for surface water sources are often lacking.
9. Good-Quality Groundwater			Groundwater is affected by farming, towns, roads, contaminated land, over-abstraction etc. Monitoring is inadequate, and many water sources lack sufficient protection. Water authorities' programmes of measures are expected to help meet this objective.
10. A Balanced Marine Environment, Flourishing Coastal Areas and Archipelagos			Coastal and offshore development pressures are growing. The status of cod and eel populations is critical, but the eastern Baltic cod stock shows signs of recovery. Welcome progress has been made in establishing nature reserves and areas closed to fishing.

OBJECTIVE	Forecast for 2020	Trend	Factors affecting the assessment
11. Thriving Wetlands			Wetland conservation and restoration are slowly progressing. Environmental stewardship needs to improve, especially in forestry. On the plus side: a revised Mire Protection Plan and continued progress on Natura 2000, water management and threatened species.
12. Sustainable Forests			Forests are intensively exploited. Dead wood, old forest and mature forest with a large deciduous element show positive trends, but forests of high nature conservation value are being felled and cultural environments damaged. Greater care must be taken of such areas and more resources put into forest protection.
13. A Varied Agricultural Landscape			Natural and cultural assets are threatened by both scrub encroachment and intensification of farming. Agri-environment measures and business and rural development are major factors affecting the prospects of achieving the objective.
14. A Magnificent Mountain Landscape			Reindeer grazing is needed to maintain the unique values of mountain areas. Damage to soil and vegetation has increased. The number of snowmobiles with lower noise levels continues to rise. Mountain cultural heritage is inadequately protected. Interim targets will be very difficult to meet on time.
15. A Good Built Environment			Noise and poor indoor environments are a cause of health problems. Protection of cultural heritage is inadequate. Assessments regarding the targets for planning programmes and strategies, noise, and use of natural gravel have been revised; they are now judged to be very hard to achieve on time.
16. A Rich Diversity of Plant and Animal Life			Despite action to date, the loss of biodiversity (both species and ecosystems) continues. Several common species, e.g. farmland birds, are declining. The status of threatened species has deteriorated. Many biological resources are not being used sustainably.

\* Target year 2050, as a first step

### Key to symbols used for assessments of the objectives

#### Smileys

- The objective is expected to be achieved within the defined time frame.
- The objective can be achieved within the defined time frame, provided that further action is taken.
- The objective will be very difficult or not possible to achieve within the defined time frame, even if further action is taken.

#### Trend arrows

- The trend in the state of the environment is positive.
- No clear trend in the state of the environment can be seen.
- The trend in the state of the environment is negative.