

Rural SMEs and the environment

State of Rural Enterprise Report

No 5, December 2023

How often do rural businesses consider environmental impact in decision-making?

41% 'always',
compared to 37% of urban



45% 'sometimes',
compared to 42% of urban



14% 'never',
compared to 21% of urban



How many rural businesses take environmental action?

57%
compared to 53% of urban



What steps do they take?

3% measure emissions using an online calculator

14% put in place environmental certification

23% undertake environmental reports or audits

24% introduce new or improved delivery, transport or distribution systems

38% introduce new low-carbon products or services

42% conduct training on environmental matters

46% introduce new or improved production processes

90% recycle waste, water or materials

What benefits do they experience from taking environmental action?



47% contribute to their company's identity and reputation, compared to 59% of urban



31% help their staff develop new skills, compared to 41% of urban



23% create new profitable opportunities, compared to 27% of urban

How many rural businesses feel restricted in taking environmental action?

45%
compared to 40% of urban

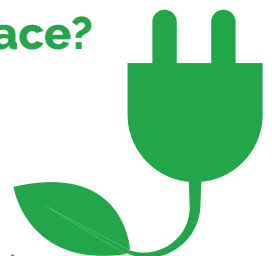


What barriers do they face?

67% cost of purchasing or installing greener technology



33% lack information on low-carbon technologies



30% lack relevant skills within the firm

33% lack people locally to advise or install solutions

26% uncertain demand for low-carbon products or services