

(b) Make consumers aware of the health and environmental impact of products, through means such as consumer legislation and environmental labelling;

(c) Encourage specific consumer-oriented programmes such as recycling and deposit/refund systems.

(d) Exercise leadership through government purchasing

37. Governments themselves also play a role in consumption, particularly in countries where the public sector plays a large role in the economy and can have a considerable influence on both corporate decisions and public perceptions. They should therefore review the purchasing policies of their agencies and departments so that they may improve, where possible, the environmental content of government procurement policies, without prejudice to international trade principles.

(e) Move towards environmentally sound pricing

38. Without the stimulus of prices and market signals which make clear to producers and consumers the environmental costs of the consumption of energy, materials, and natural resources and the generation of wastes, significant changes in consumption and production patterns seem unlikely to occur in the near future.

39. Some progress has begun in the use of appropriate economic instruments to influence consumer behaviour. These instruments include ^{no ceiling charges} environmental charges and taxes, deposit/refund systems and other ~~price-related~~ economic instruments. This process should be encouraged in the light of country-specific conditions.

(f) Reinforcing values which support sustainable consumption

40. Governments and private-sector organizations should promote more positive attitudes towards sustainable consumption through education, public awareness programmes and other means such as positive advertising of products and services that utilize environmentally sound technologies or encourage sustainable production and consumption patterns. In the review of the implementation of Agenda 21, an assessment of the progress achieved in developing these national policies and strategies should be given due consideration.

Means of implementation

41. This programme is concerned primarily with changes in unsustainable patterns of consumption and production and values that encourage sustainable consumption patterns and lifestyles. It requires the combined efforts of Governments, consumers and producers. Particular attention should be paid to the significant role which women and households play as consumers and the potential impacts of their combined purchasing power on the economy.