What is Go Green Europe?

• A collaboration between four partners: LB Wandsworth, C.E.S.S.I.E, AJE, and the South Denmark European Office

• Research in to supporting SMEs to identify and implement green business measures

• Findings were disseminated to policy makers and other stakeholders at a local, regional, national and transnational level.
How was the research carried out?

- Focus on SMEs in specific regional locations from each country
- Survey of businesses to identify approaches to improving environmental performance
- Study visits to showcase examples of best practice in each country region
- 4 country reports-focus on existing good practice and Overarching report
Policy

- Europe 2020 outlines integrated strategies to boost employment levels, economic growth and environmental sustainability
- EU policy addresses the environmental and economic performance of SMEs
- EU wide targets create obligations for Member States to set national targets
- Varying levels of environmental legislation across countries has led to the development of different support systems and incentives for businesses
Environmental support to SMEs

- Wide disparities exist in the levels of support between Member States
- Environmental factors are becoming integrated into traditional business support in all partner countries
- South Denmark- Green Networks
- South London- Go Green Plus
- Sicily- Grants to implement EMAS or ISO 14001
- Palermo- AJE develop guidelines and training
UK

- Ambitious national environmental targets have increased the need for low carbon business models
- Good practice sharing is vital for SMEs
- Access to finance is important but not vital
- Capital investments are not always necessary
Denmark

- SMEs can benefit from Denmark’s tough environmental legislation and taxation
- Danish environmental policy and strategies are well coordinated, leading to effective actions by business
- Environmental networks and online portals are valuable ways to improve environmental performance
- Technological investments and systems have helped improve environmental performance
Spain

- Small improvements make a big difference
- SMEs need to be made aware of financial and technical support that exist at the national and regional levels
- Greater external intervention is required
- There is a need for greater engagement with environmental business networks
- National and regional level environmental accreditation schemes should be made more available
Italy

- Financial support is key for many businesses in order to enable environmental improvements
- Bottom up approaches to environment support are effective but need to be strengthened
- Policy actions and support must be tailored, flexible and dynamic
- The existence of SME clusters in Sicily provides a good opportunity to reach large numbers of businesses
Overarching Conclusions

- Member States with more advanced environmental legislation more successfully incentivise businesses to improve their environmental performance.
- Many SMEs still have difficulties in complying with environmental legislation.
- Environmental actions undertaken by SMEs are dependent on access to information and support.
- Responses dependent on the size and nature of the organisation.
Overarching Conclusions

• Environmental support for SMEs needs to exist on a range of scales, to ensure that all businesses can access the help and guidance they need.
• Local outreach programmes are a valuable way to initiate environmental improvements in SMEs
• Business support should be flexible, tailored and respond to the varied nature of SMEs
• Support should include financial, technical and holistic measures
Questions?