



National Audit Office

# Potential impacts of Environmental Audits

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# TYPES OF IMPACT

## Financial Impacts

**Reduced expenditure**

**Revenue increases**

**Non-cash public sector improvements**

– productivity or output increase for the same resource inputs

**Other benefits to third parties** – e.g. reduced energy bills for consumers would count as a financial savings

## Wider Impacts

Addressing government-wide problems across our work

Delivering enhanced services to Parliament and other stakeholders

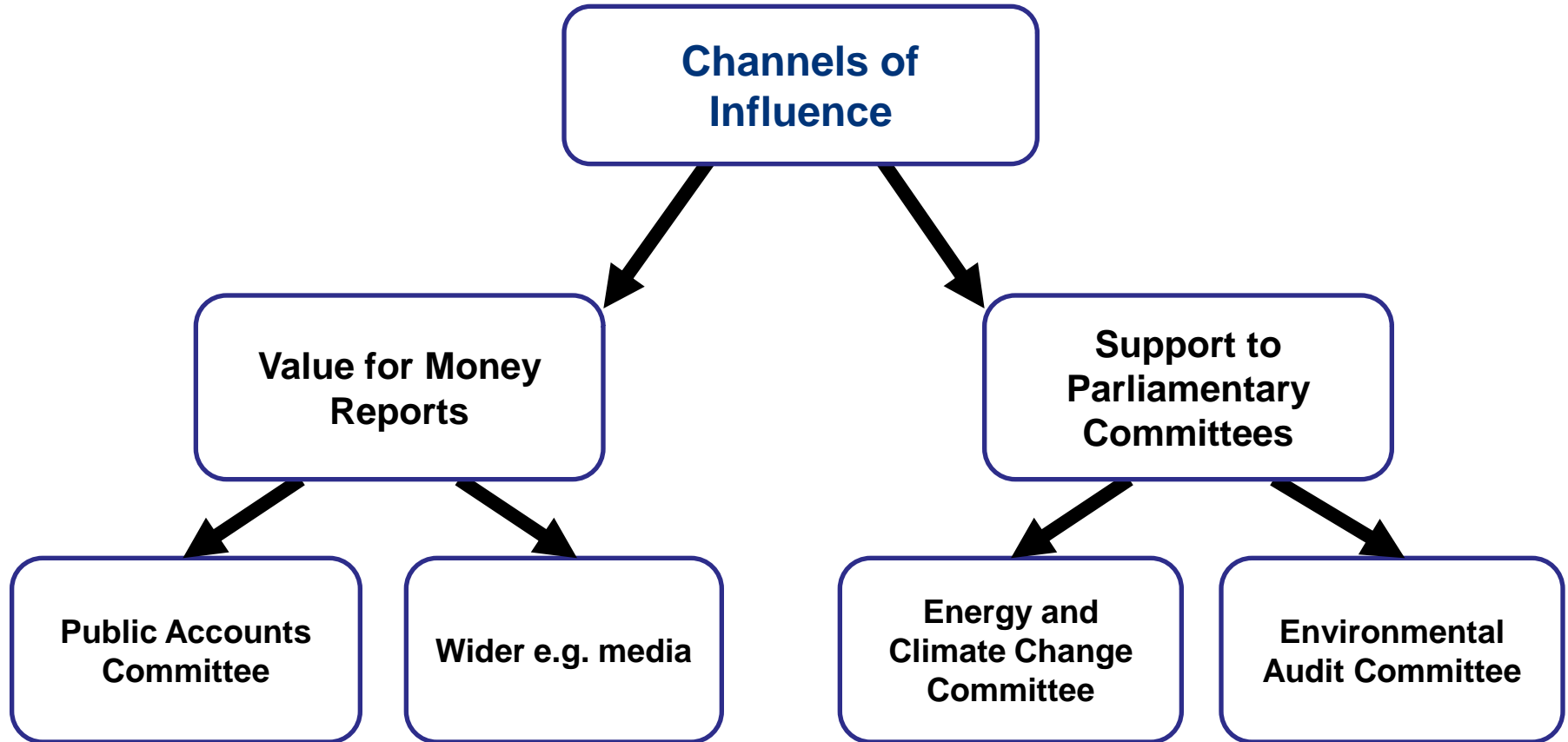
Developing leading edge competences

Reactions to our work and behavioural change

# IMPACTS PROCESS



# ACHIEVING IMPACTS



## UK NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE SAVINGS

- In 2009 achieved financial impacts totalling £890 million (over 11 times our net running costs)
- Most of our impact from environmental audit has been to secure agreement to improve the way in which environmental programmes are planned and managed
- Most of these impacts relate to improved processes, but do not directly measure the actual environmental impact of our audits

# CHALLENGES OF MEASURING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- **Longer term impacts**  
Poses problems for calculation and monitoring
- **Quantification**  
Difficult to attribute monetary values – and requires adoption of new currencies e.g. carbon pricing
- **Causality**  
Where recommendations are process driven, challenge to measuring causal impact on future environmental outcomes

# GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES

## What this audit was about

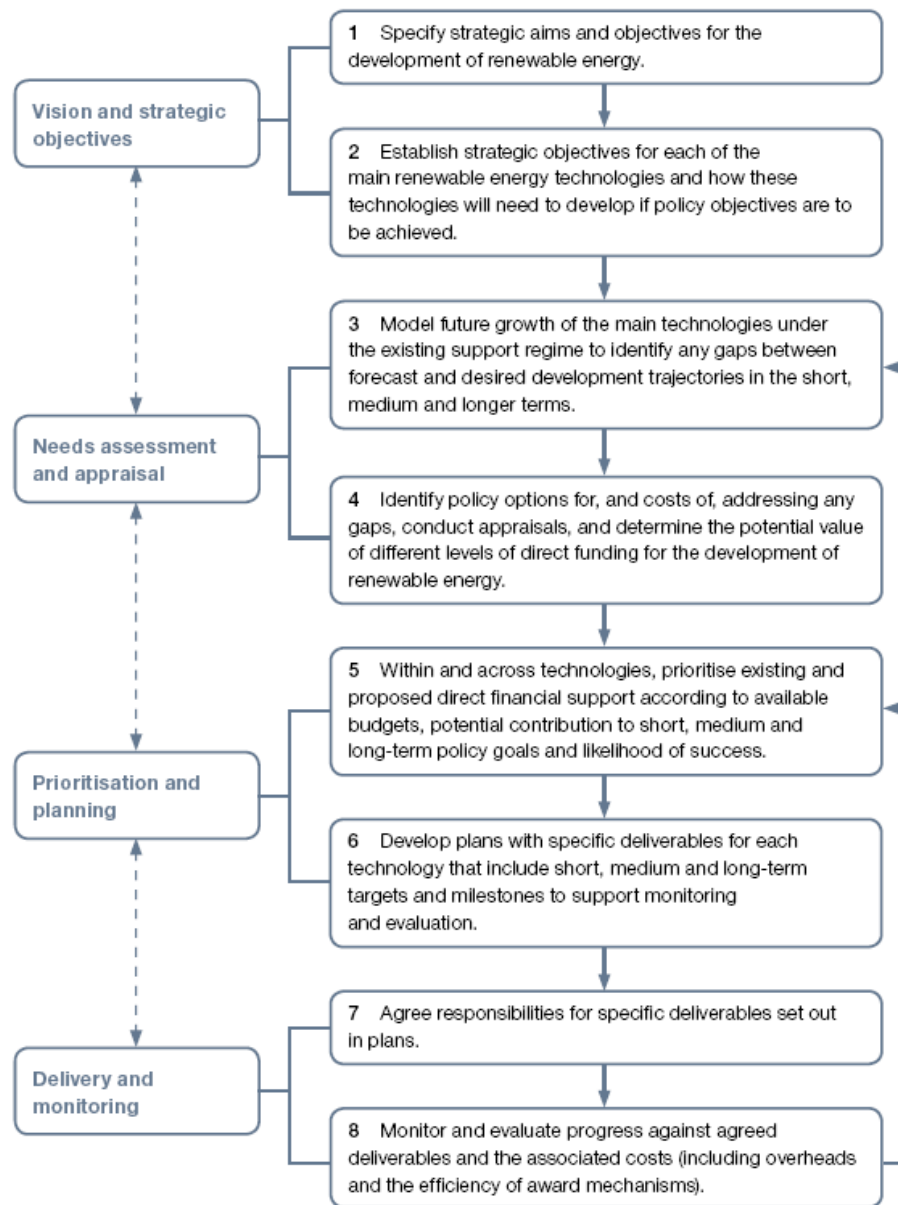
- Renewable energy central to UK climate change and energy strategy
- Direct funding supports demonstration and development
- We looked at how planning and delivery, and impact of funding

## What we found

- Funding and strategy had not been coherent
- Lack of leadership across funders
- Lack of transparency in financial management

## Audit impact

- Impact on planning
- NAO planning model based on R&D planning and road-mapping
- Way of structuring thinking





# BUSINESS WASTE

## What this audit was about

- 280 million tonnes of waste
- £240 million Business Efficiency and Waste programme
- We examined impact of during the first three years

## What we found

- Lack of clear targets or research
- No formal evaluation
- Low awareness

## Audit impact

- Department agreed to carry out formal evaluation
- New model to monitor impact
- Targets for new initiatives

# REDUCING HOUSEHOLD ENERGY CONSUMPTION

## What this audit was about

- Household energy responsible for 27% of UK carbon emissions
- £2.6 billion in programmes to reduce energy consumption
- Existing homes, new homes, household appliances

## What we found

- Data not updated data since 2004
- Improved efficiency, but consumption issues
- Deficiencies in data
- Barriers to action

## Audit impact

- New use of data matching and combining datasets
- Examined advice for property owners
- Stakeholder assessment

# Conclusion

- Both financial and non-financial impacts can be achieved, but significant challenges to monitoring and measuring impact of environmental audit work over long timescales
- Impacts should be considered at all stages of the audit cycle
- NAO achieving impacts and influence through the established PAC mechanism as well as through support to other select committees