

Microalgae in the UK

Environmental Permitting

An environmental permit (or exemption) is likely to be needed if anything that enters or leaves the site is classified as a waste.

The regional contacts are detailed here:

	Main implementing legislation	Primary implementing agency
England /Wales	Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations (EPR) 2010	Environment Agency https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency
Scotland	The Pollution Prevention & Control (Scotland) Regulations 2000	Scottish Environmental Protection Agency www.sepa.org.uk
N.Ireland	The Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003	Dept of the Environment Northern Ireland http://www.doeni.gov.uk/

Key Points to consider:

1. What is the size of the facility?
2. What services exist already on the site?
3. Is the site located close to dwellings / environmentally sensitive areas / sites of special scientific interest?
4. Are any discharges produced by the site? Will significant amounts of waste be stored on site?
5. Are there any concerns about noise?
6. Are there any emissions from site?

First step:

- Contact local Environment Agency

Planning

Permission for construction of an algal growth facility is highly dependent on the scale, and the type of building housing PBRs etc. Small test facilities may be exempt: Building Regulations (2010) Schedule 2, Class III "Greenhouses and Agricultural Buildings". This may also be relevant for small polytunnel structures.

For larger premises planning permission will be required. While the process for obtaining permission is site-specific, an overview of the steps and timelines are given below:

- Pre-application submission / Consultation: (optional) meeting with council in advance of submitting application. Community engagement may be useful.
- Planning Application: submitted in electronic format, online via a Planning Portal. This will include detailed existing / proposed floor and site plans as well as a design and access statement. The application should also be accompanied by a supporting planning statement detailing how the proposals accord with current planning policy.
- Application Process: The planning application process is likely to take either 8 or 13 weeks from registration, depending on scale.

Key Points to consider:

1. What size is the facility?
2. Is the site located close to dwellings / environmentally sensitive areas / sites of special scientific interest?
3. Are any discharges produced by the site?
4. What services exist already on the site?
5. Is the site likely to cause nuisance - e.g. noise above levels of agricultural machinery / odour / light above dense street lighting?

First step:

- Contact Local Planning Authority

Regulatory Issues

Regulatory issues are very much dependent on end use of biomass. Please consult the relevant factsheet for further information.

Factsheet #15. Algae as Feedstock for Energy Generation - European fuel quality and other bioenergy legislation are explained

Factsheet #16. Algae as Feedstock for Chemicals - this covers REACH and other pertinent legislation

Factsheet #17. Algae as Feedstock for Food or Feed - FEMAS and other regulations for entering the food chain are described in more detail.

Key Points to consider:

1. What inputs have gone into the production process: are any classified as waste?
2. What is the target end use of the algal biomass?
3. What further processing steps are required?