

Committee on Climate Change
7 Holbein Place, London SW1W 8NR

Prof Ian Boyd, Chief Scientist
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
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19 December 2012

Dear Ian

Preparations for the second climate change risk assessment (CCRA)

This letter sets out the advice of the Adaptation Sub-Committee (ASC) to inform early preparations of the Government on the second climate change risk assessment. This is in line with our statutory responsibilities in the Climate Change Act. The advice draws on the findings of two independent reviews commissioned by the Committee, and discussions with Defra's Science Advisory Council and organisations from the Living with Environmental Change partnership.

The second risk assessment should keep a tight focus on its primary objective of informing national priorities for adaptation, particularly given current budget constraints in the public sector. The Committee advises that this can best be achieved if the evidence base for the next assessment is prepared in two phases, as set out below and in the accompanying annex. This work should be targeted in areas where adaptation action is most urgent.

1. **Managed research programme** (April 2013 to March 2015) to fast-track new work to fill some of the most important evidence gaps on the impacts of climate change. In particular, the programme should work to improve the evidence where changes are likely to affect the ranking and characterisation of risks, including to:
 - i. explore implications for impact models of the latest scientific evidence on climate change, for example faster rates of sea level rise;
 - ii. deepen understanding of known climate risks through models that characterise the underlying mechanisms, including indirect effects and cross-sectoral interactions, such as through water use and price;
 - iii. broaden understanding of climate risks to cover some of those not quantified in the first assessment, for example surface water flooding and international impacts; and
 - iv. examine how to incorporate scenarios of socio-economic change and current/planned adaptation action into the next risk assessment, for example the net effect of floodplain development and flood defence investment on risk.

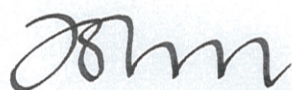
The ASC plans to work with Defra and the Environment Agency to scope these evidence priorities in more detail early next year. At the same time, Defra may wish to explore options for administering and delivering the research programme, which could, for example, be managed through one of the UK research councils.

2. **Independent national assessment** (April 2015 to July 2016) to assemble and synthesise the evidence gathered from the research programme and reconcile it with other ongoing research.

The ASC plans to undertake an independent synthesis of the evidence, in line with our duty under the Climate Change Act to provide the Government with such advice. This would take place in the year after our statutory report on adaptation progress. The Government could draw on this evidence base for its own report to Parliament on the risks of climate change in the UK.

I hope this provides you with useful advice as you start preparations for the next climate change risk assessment. As ever, I would be happy to discuss these issues further with you. I am copying this letter to Colin Church, the Defra Director with responsibility for climate change issues.

As ever



Lord Krebs Kt FRS
Chair, Adaptation Sub-Committee