

Committee on Climate Change
7 Holbein Place
London SW1W 8NR

5th March 2012

Rt Hon Caroline Spelman MP, Secretary of State
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Nobel House, 17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR

Dear Caroline

**REVIEW OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE RISK ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE
NATIONAL ADAPTATION PROGRAMME: ROLE OF THE ADAPTATION SUB-COMMITTEE**

Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA)

First of all I would like to thank you for inviting me to speak at the launch of the CCRA and the subsequent business breakfast. Both events were very positive and I think your officials should be very pleased with the reception from stakeholders of the CCRA. My purpose in writing this letter is to set out some aspects of the future work of the ASC that will contribute to the review of the CCRA and the development of the National Adaptation Programme.

When I last wrote to you in November 2011, I mentioned that the ASC propose to undertake our own independent review of the CCRA. Since then we have commissioned Professor Rob Wilby from Loughborough University and Paul Watkiss of Paul Watkiss Associates to review aspects of the CCRA, focussing largely on methodology and results. Both projects are scheduled to complete by the end April 2012. My officials will work closely with yours, drawing on the findings of these reviews, to inform the Government's preparations for the next CCRA.

I understand from your officials that you have commissioned HR Wallingford to review the process underpinning the first CCRA, and that Bob Watson and Neil Thornton propose to undertake a small internal review of the first risk assessment. I have been invited to participate in this review.

National Adaptation Programme (NAP)

As you know, the Committee has a formal role under the Climate Change Act to report to Parliament with an independent assessment of the progress made towards implementing the objectives and policies in the NAP.

In order to deliver its formal role, my Committee is developing a toolkit to assess whether

the NAP delivers on its commitments, namely whether it is enabling actions to prepare for the key climate risks identified by the CCRA. This toolkit has two broad components:

- i. *Using indicators to monitor change in risk* – these will provide baseline, quantitative information about the main factors affecting the UK's exposure and sensitivity to climate (risk indicators), the amount of adaptation underway (action indicators) and the overall effect on risk (outcome indicators).
- ii. *Evaluating the effectiveness of adaptation to address risk* – undertaking analysis to ascertain: (a) how much adaptation it is cost effective to implement now and if sufficient adaptation is underway, drawing on the existing evidence base, including Defra's Economics of Climate Resilience project; and (b) whether decision-makers are explicitly weighing up the implications of climate change against other objectives in long-term investments and strategic plans.

Between now and our first statutory report in 2015, the Committee will apply its assessment toolkit to each of the broad risks identified by the CCRA, starting with flooding and drought in our next report, due in July this year. As part of this, my Committee will work flexibly with your officials to ensure that our assessment toolkit can reflect the emerging priorities in the NAP.

At the last Committee meeting, your officials also highlighted the informal role that the Committee can play as an expert advisory body and sounding board in the development of the NAP, for example through our ongoing analysis of preparedness for flooding and drought. We may also be able to provide informal advice on how the NAP could address the wider risks (and opportunities) to the UK from the international impacts of climate change, for example on trade and food security.

I welcome that your officials have agreed to establish channels through which the ASC can provide informal input on the development of the NAP, in order to make the best use of the expertise of the Committee.



Lord Krebs Kt FRS
Chairman

Adaptation Sub-Committee, Committee on Climate Change