

Meeting on 13 July 2017

In attendance were: Dieter Helm, Paul Leinster, Georgina Mace, Colin Mayer, Kathy Willis, John Curnow (Defra Chief Economist). The Secretary of State attended for part of the meeting.

1. Actions from the previous meeting (14 July)

Actions were agreed for publication, with the addition of an action to take forward stakeholder engagement on improving Workbook.

2. Outcomes from meeting with Defra Secretary of State

Dieter Helm updated the Committee on his meeting with the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State had confirmed the government's commitment to an Environment Plan, which would also address agriculture post-Brexit. The Plan should progress quickly for maximum impact, and the Secretary of State had formally requested September advice from the Committee on what the Plan should be and do. Secretary of State was very interested in the idea of an international conference to foreground the UK's global leadership on natural capital.

3. International conference

Dieter Helm updated that he had, at the Secretary of State's request, submitted a note on possible handling, for the Secretary of State to use in discussion with No.10 and FCO. The Committee agreed to proceed according to the response received from the Secretary of State.

4. Advice to Secretary of State on 25 Year Environment Plan

The Secretary of State attended to meet the Committee and to set out his vision and priorities. He made clear the value he placed on the work of the Committee, and reiterated his request for their rapid advice on how to deliver the best possible Plan. There was discussion with Committee members as to what would be valuable for the advice to cover.

Subsequently, the Committee discussed its approach to providing the government with advice on the 25 Year Environment Plan. In discussion, it was agreed that the opportunity to provide advice on the Plan was a welcome one, and that the Committee should ensure that this was credible, comprehensive and reflective of the Committee's collective views.

It was agreed that:

- Georgina would draft and circulate an initial outline for consideration, with a view to the Committee having an agreed outline draft by the end of July;
- Secretariat would follow up on whether advice agreed at the Committee's September meeting would fit Secretary of State's timing; and
- Dieter would follow up with absent members (Ian and Diane) to update them.

5. Pioneers

The Committee discussed its advice to government on the Pioneer schemes, and their support for the Pioneer schemes. In discussion, it was agreed that:

- Paper 5a, the Committee's advice to the Pioneers, would be circulated for final comments, and then sent on with thanks to the Pioneer representatives who attended the recent round table (action Secretariat).
- Paper 5b, the Committee's advice to government, would be circulated for final comments and then submitted (action Secretariat).

6. Workbook revision

The preparation of version two of the Workbook was discussed. There was some concern that stakeholders were still struggling to engage with catchment accounting. It was agreed that Colin would revisit the Manual to strengthen this aspect.

7. A.O.B

There had been a suggestion for the Committee to give evidence to the EFRA Select Committee, and also to engage with the BEIS Select Committee (action Secretariat to follow up).