



ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FORUM

c/o Society for the Environment
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Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP

Prime Minister

10 Downing Street

LONDON SW1A 2AA

29 September 2023

OPEN LETTER FROM EPF TO PM RE GREEN POLICY REVERSALS

Dear Prime Minister

Cc: The Rt Hon Thérèse Coffey MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and
The Rt Hon Claire Coutinho MP, Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero

The Environmental Policy Forum (EPF) is a coalition of 13 professional bodies and learned societies representing around 70,000 environmental professionals across a variety of different disciplines. The views expressed in this letter are those of professionals, close to practice, duly qualified, and often working in industry, many running successful businesses. The EPF network strives to promote environmental sustainability and resilience for the public benefit.

It is on behalf of this extensive network of experts that we must express deep concerns regarding the green policy reversals announced on the 20 September – notably:

- 1. These policy reversals are hugely detrimental to our chances of delivering net zero by 2050.**

For the UK to reach net zero by 2050 as laid out in law, we all need to be clear about our role in helping deliver on this vital commitment. The policy reversals outlined on the 20 September leave the UK without a clear roadmap to deliver on this ambition, which is why the subsequent

confirmation that the UK remains committed to meeting its net zero goals – while welcome – fails to allay our concerns.

Reflective of an unstable, confusing policy environment, these policy reversals undermine the confidence of investors, threatening the investment in skills needed for the green jobs of now and the future. Without the necessary investment, experts, organisations, and members of the public alike will simply lack the tools and opportunities to deliver net zero.

2. These policy reversals fail to recognise the economic, social, environmental and health related benefits of achieving net zero.

The announcement included a welcome commitment to ‘embrace with even greater enthusiasm, the incredible opportunities of green industry’. Indeed these opportunities are recognised within the UK net zero strategy, [stating that](#) the strategy’s implementation could create another 440,000 well-paying jobs and unlock £90 billion in private investment by 2030.

However, this recognition is at odds with the reversal or weakening of key policies such as stopping the sale of new combustion engine vehicles and gas boilers by 2030 and 2035 respectively. Also jarring with what has been said and committed elsewhere is the use of negative rhetoric, referring to green policies with undue emphasis on ‘unacceptable costs’. This is despite those measures in many cases likely to save people money in the longer term – and on top of the social, environmental and health related benefits that green policies provide.

We call on you to reconsider these policy changes – allowing us to focus on working together to deliver net zero by 2050.

We stand ready to assist, provide further evidence for our arguments and, as always, are happy to discuss in greater detail.

Additional note as of 27.9

In the writing of this letter, further regressive changes to environmental policy were announced through a delay in the implementation of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), causing more uncertainty and confusion for experts and investors. We wish to express concern that this delay to BNG implementation calls into question the ability of the government to meet targets associated with its 25-year environment plan and the local nature recovery strategies.

Yours Sincerely and signed on behalf of the following organisations,

Stephen Marcus Jones
Chief Executive, Association for Consultancy
and Engineering and Environmental
Industries Commission



Dr Daniela Russi
Senior Policy Manager,
British Ecological Society



Dr Phil James, CEO and
Louise Hosking, Executive Director of
Environmental Health,
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health



Lee Marshall
Policy and External Affairs Director,
Chartered Institution of Wastes Management



Kieran Laxen
Vice Chair of IAQM and Chair of the IAQM
Engagement and Consultation subcommittee,
Institute of Air Quality Management



Louise Simpson
Executive Director, Institute of Chartered
Foresters



David Bunt
Chief Executive, Institute of Fisheries
Management



Joseph Lewis
Policy Lead, Institution of Environmental
Sciences



Dr Emma Wilcox
Chief Executive, Society for the Environment



Notes:

1. Representing around 470 stakeholders combined, the Association for Consultancy and Engineering (ACE) champions infrastructure and the built environment, while the Environmental Industries Commission (EIC) advocates for emerging environmental markets. Together, shaping a sustainable future, collaborating to address climate change, sustainability, and the journey to Net Zero. acenet.co.uk and eic-uk.co.uk
2. The British Ecological Society (BES) is the largest scientific society for ecologists in Europe with a membership of 7,000 in over 120 countries around the world. We support the ecology community at all stages of their careers through our journals, meetings, grants, and education and policy work. The first ecology society to be established anywhere in the world, we have been the champion of ecology for more than a century. britishecologicalsociety.org
3. The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) is the membership and awarding body for the environmental health sector. Our members work around the world, improving lives and demonstrating excellence across all areas of environmental health including food, public health, housing, environmental protection, and health and safety. cieh.org

4. The Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM) is the leading professional body for the waste management sector representing over 5,500 individuals in the UK. Established in 1898, CIWM is a non-profit making organisation, dedicated to the promotion of professional competence amongst waste managers. CIWM seeks to raise standards for those working in and with the sector by producing best practice guidance, developing educational and training initiatives, and providing information on key waste-related issues. ciwm.co.uk
5. The Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) is the professional body for air quality professionals, with over 650 members. We act as the voice of air quality in the UK by producing useful and timely guidance on matters affecting air quality professionals and by responding to Government consultations. iaqm.co.uk
6. The Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF) is the Royal Chartered home for tree professionals across the UK. It is the only UK body to offer both Chartered Forester and Chartered Arboriculturist titles. As part of its ongoing strategic objectives, the Institute regulates standards of entry to the profession; supports members and provides guidance to professionals in other sectors; offers educational advice and training to both students and tree professionals seeking to develop their careers and works to foster a greater public awareness and understanding of forestry and arboriculture. The Institute has more than 2,000 members who practice forestry, arboriculture and related disciplines in the private sector, central and local government, non-government organisations, charities, universities and colleges throughout England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Integrity, excellence, collaboration, sustainability, and transparency form the basis on which they operate and these values underpin all of their strategic objectives. The Institute works with forestry sector organisations and higher education institutes to promote forestry and arboricultural career paths to young people, in order to ensure the continued growth of this dynamic sector and address the ongoing skills shortage. charteredforesters.org
7. The Institute of Fisheries Management (IFM) is an international organisation of people whose aim is to support and promote sustainable fisheries management for the benefit of our members, fisheries, wildlife and society. ifm.org.uk
8. The Institution of Environmental Sciences (IES) is a membership organisation representing professionals from fields as diverse as air quality, land contamination and education - wherever environmental work is underpinned by science. We promote and raise public awareness of environmental science by supporting professional scientists and academics and by standing up for the voice of science, scientists, and the natural world in policy. the-ies.org
9. The Society for the Environment (SocEnv) is comprised of 25 Licenced Bodies, with over 600,000 members between them. It received a Royal Charter in 2004, which empowers it to regulate the Chartered Environmentalist, Registered Environmental Practitioner and Registered Environmental Technician professional registrations globally. There are now over

8,000 environmental professionals currently registered who share a common vision of delivering sustainability through environmental professionalism. socenv.org.uk