



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Joan McAlpine MSP
Convener
Culture, Tourism, Europe and
External Relations Committee

c/o Clerk to the Committee
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Dear Joan,

Thank you for your letter of the 21 December 2017 on EU Engagement and Scrutiny of the Committees of the Scottish Parliament.

The Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee has undertaken several pieces of work this year in relation to the decision of the UK to leave the European Union and the impact of this on the environment, climate change and land reform. I welcome this opportunity to update the Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations Committee on this work.

Focussed consideration of issues relating to Brexit

Evidence session

In March 2017, the Committee heard from legal academics specialising in environment law on the potential implications of the decision to leave the EU. The following gave evidence to the Committee:

- **Professor Gavin Little**, Professor in Public and Environmental Law, University of Stirling
- **Professor Elisa Morgera**, Professor of Global Environmental Law at Strathclyde University Law School and Director of the Strathclyde Centre for Environmental Law and Governance.
- **Professor Colin Reid**, Professor of Environmental Law, University of Dundee
- **Dr. Annalisa Savaresi**, Lecturer in Environmental Law, University of Stirling
- **Bob Ward**, Policy and Communications Director at the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment, The London School of Economics and Political Science

The official report of this meeting is [available here](#) and it was a very useful session. Additional written evidence is [available here](#).

Engagement with the UK Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales and the Northern Ireland Assembly

Following this meeting, the Committee wrote to its counterparts in Westminster, Cardiff Bay and Stormont to highlight the evidence received and to propose engagement on issues of mutual interest. These meetings were slightly delayed by the UK General Election and took place in November and December 2017. We were delighted to host a meeting with the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee of the National Assembly for Wales in the Scottish Parliament in November 2017. In early December, the Convener and Deputy Convener travelled to Westminster to meet with various Committees from both the House of Commons and the House of Lords, namely:

- Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee (House of Commons)
- Exiting the EU Select Committee (House of Commons)
- EU Select Committee (House of Lords)
- EU Select Committee Sub Committee on EU Energy and Environment (House of Lords)

All of these meetings were extremely valuable and the Committees have agreed to maintain this dialogue.

Visit to Brussels

In addition, the Committee visited Brussels in November 2017, where it met with:

- The European Commission
- Officials working on environment and climate change issues in the embassies to the European Union of:
 - Iceland
 - Canada
 - Switzerland
 - Norway

This engagement with non-member states highlighted several issues which will inform our future consideration of the impact of the decision to leave the European Union on climate change and the environment.

The Committee has also received several oral briefings from Parliament and Scottish Government officials throughout the passage of the EU Withdrawal Bill.

In February 2018, the Committee will hold another oral evidence session on the EU Withdrawal Bill and the development of common frameworks. I will ask the Committee's clerks to ensure the details of this are communicated to your clerks as these are confirmed.

Other work on Brexit

Since the outcome of the referendum was announced, the Committee has sought to include questions on how this will affect various elements of its remit in its other work. Notable highlights include:

- Asking agencies who have given evidence on the Scottish Government's draft budget (17/18 and 18/19) about how the loss of European funding will affect their work and what is being done to support EU citizens working in those organisations;
- How the withdrawal from the EU Emissions Trading System will affect the proposals in the draft Climate Change Plan;
- Hearing from research institutes how their international work and funding arrangements will be impacted; and
- Discussing the consequences of this with academics and hearing concerns as to the civil service/NGO capacity to fulfil functions in terms of environmental governance and regulation currently emanating from the EU.

We have also taken the opportunity to question the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform on the impact of Brexit on several occasions.

I hope this overview is useful to your Committee in its deliberations and please contact the Clerks should you require further details.

Yours sincerely,



Graeme Dey MSP
Convener
Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee