



## **Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management**

# **Position Statement on the UK leaving the EU**

**August 2016**

CIEEM envisages a continuation of protection for species and habitats in line with current EU legislation. However we recognise that there is now an opportunity to improve implementation of legislation for the benefit of society, the economy and the environment.

CIEEM recognises that the UK cannot move forward with natural environment legislation until we are clear on our future trading relationship with the EU as this will have implications for which pieces of EU environmental legislation may still be applicable.

However, providing certainty for all stakeholders must be an immediate priority for the UK government. Industry and investment relies on certainty and the current legislation provides this.

CIEEM would therefore like to see enabling legislation that will continue EU legislation post Brexit, which could be achieved by adopting current EU natural environment legislation.

This will provide the opportunity and time to then improve and enhance the legislation and its implementation over a longer time period, and at the same time alleviate pressure on governments and statutory agencies.

CIEEM notes that current EU legislation is also the mechanism by which the UK meets many of its international environmental commitments (e.g. Bonn, Bern, Rio, Ramsar, etc.) and thus any review of environmental legislation must take account of this. Any review should also provide for the ongoing protection and enhancement of the UK Overseas Territories and marine environments.

Recent new environmental and sustainability legislation, such as the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, has been built on the foundation of EU legislation, and it would therefore seem appropriate to enable a continuing of EU legislation in the short-term. For England and Wales the proposed Law Commission Wildlife Bill could be used as an initial draft for future legislation.

The immediate short-term focus should be on ensuring that each UK nation has in place a clear and ambitious integrated vision for its biodiversity and natural environment, which can then be used to determine what legislation is needed to deliver that vision.

For England we advocate that the immediate priority should be the drafting and publishing of an ambitious and progressive 25-Year Plan for the environment (including both nature and farming).

The National Assembly for Wales must support the implementation of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and the *Nature Recovery Plan for Wales*.

The Scottish Parliament must support the implementation of the *2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity: A Strategy for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Scotland*.

The Northern Ireland Assembly must support the implementation of *Valuing Nature: A Biodiversity Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020*.

We are also mindful that how environmental management and protection is approached in Northern Ireland has profound implications in the Republic of Ireland and vice versa.

It is imperative that the above plans are based on evidence and sound science, and are interconnected with wider considerations such as agri-environment subsidies and fisheries policies such that they provide public benefits and are not counterproductive.

In negotiating a new relationship with the EU, CIEEM advocates the importance of maintaining access to research and environmental funding, the economic importance of enabling UK environmental expertise to access the single market, and the ability for UK organisations to continue to employ EU citizens.

CIEEM has offered our independent expertise and advice to governments and Ministers and we will work with all stakeholders to get the best possible result for the natural environment.



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