

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Corporate Governance should include sustainability, says Environmental Experts

Coventry, England (26 September 2016)

The Society for the Environment has contributed evidence to the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee inquiry into Corporate Governance. The report was spearheaded by former Chair of the Welsh Government body Natural Resources Wales, Dr Peter Matthews, and implored government to take a more uniformed approach to corporate governance guidelines as well as including sustainability in director responsibilities.

The Society believe that the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (DBEIS) has an important part to play in environmental protection and damage mitigation. DBEIS is well placed to embed sustainability into the heart of the UK industrial strategy and corporate governance is an integral aspect of this. The submission to the inquiry by the Society reflects this belief, as well as emphasising that we cannot rely solely on regulation for environmental protection and sustainability; there needs to be a change in culture.

This submission also builds upon the Society's belief that sustainability should be included with the Nolan Principles, the set of standards to be followed by office holders in public life. In April this year, the Society wrote to several prominent ministers, including those within the Cabinet office, outlining how such a duty could be implemented, citing the Environment Act (Wales) 2016 as an example of where this was already in effect.

Dr Peter Matthews said "We needed to take this opportunity to reiterate that the concept of sustainability as applied to natural resources is missing for current codes, and if we do not get this right the consequences will be more serious that the collapse of individual companies. We wish to see this added to any changes made in governance."

The Society will continue its work encouraging sustainability as part of corporate, executive and director responsibility. There is an event scheduled for 2017, to be hosted by the Society and Castle Debates, on the topic of Corporate Governance.

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CONTACTS:

t: 0345 337 2951 e: communications@socenv.org.uk

NOTES TO EDITOR:

The Society for the Environment, is comprised of 24 Licenced Professional Partners, with over 500,000 members between them. It received a Royal Charter in 2004, which empowers it to regulate the Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv) qualification in the UK. There are now over 7,000 CEnvs who share a common vision of delivering sustainability through environmental professionalism. Further information can be found at www.socenv.org.uk.

About Dr Peter Matthews

Peter Matthews is a Chartered Environmentalist, Chartered Chemist, and Water and Environment Manager. He has held a variety of senior positions in the environmental field, in both the private and public sectors. After a career in the water industry spanning almost 35 years, he retired from Anglian Water International as Deputy Managing Director International in 1999. And after serving on the board of the Environment Agency and as Chair of the Northern Ireland Utility regulator, he was appointed in August

2012 as Founding Chair of the Welsh Government's new body for managing natural resources in Wales, Natural Resources Wales (NRW), a position he held until December 2015.

About Dr Emma Wilcox

Emma has been CEO of the Society since July 2015 and since joining the organisation has led the development of a new five-year strategy increasing registrations and profile for Chartered Environmentalists and Registered Environmental Technicians.

Her career has spanned a number of disciplines including scientific research, knowledge and technology transfer, skills and education, programme and business management and stakeholder and relationship management. Emma's strong academic background is supported by an in-depth knowledge of both public and private sector landscapes.

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