

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Brexit an opportunity to strengthen environmental protections, say professional environmentalists**

Coventry, England (27 February 2016)

The Society for the Environment has continued its work ensuring that 'Brexit' is a success for the people of the United Kingdom and our environment. This work was recognised in a recently published report by the House of Lords European Union Committee, *'Brexit: environment and climate change'*.

The report highlighted the desire of the Society to work with Government in finding ways to ensure that environmental protections were maintained and strengthened following exiting the Union, including continuation of working links with European environmental professionals outside of the European Union. The Society has written extensively to the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Department for Exiting the European Union offering their support.

Dr Emma Wilcox, Chief Executive of the Society, said, "Civil Society Organisations and Learned Societies not only have access to a large breadth of knowledge and expertise, but also to multinational networks. We are part of the Europe wide European Network of Environmental Professionals, allowing us to collaborate with professionals working across Europe, and we are currently mapping the relationships our 24 professional member bodies have with organisations in Europe to see where further opportunities exist. We intend to maintain, and strengthen, ties with the European community of environmental professionals and we offer British government use of these links."

"Environmental issues do not recognise boundaries or political treaties and the UK will continue to share common environmental challenges with our European neighbours. There is much to be learned and gained from working closely with partners across Europe, even outside of the European Union. We are keen to see a continuation of this."

Dr Peter Matthews, Chair of the Society and former Chair of Natural Resources Wales, said, "For the last 40 years, the UK has shared wisdom with Continental colleagues in pursuit of better environmental standards across Europe. The Society will continue maintain our European contacts. We urge the Governments of the UK to also continue conversing with their colleagues from across the EU and striving for the betterment of Environmental standards and we are more than willing to help facilitate this work."

The Society for the Environment will be hosting the European Network of Environmental Professionals General Assembly in Cardiff in April, bringing together delegates from eleven countries across Europe. This is following further work the Society has done with the network, including participating in a meeting with William Neale, Member of Cabinet to Karmenu Veila, the European Commissioner for Environment and Maritime Affairs.

**END**

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**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](http://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.

#### **The Licensed Partners of the Society for the Environment are:**

Arboricultural Association (AA)	Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE)
Chartered Association of Building Engineers (CABE)	Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)
Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists (CIAT)	Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC)
Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)	Society of Environmental Engineers (SEE)
Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)	Society of Operations Engineers (SOE)
Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM)	
Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM)	
Energy Institute (EI)	
Institute of Agricultural Management (IAgrM)	
Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF)	
Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)	
Institute of Fisheries Management (IFM)	
Institute of Materials, Minerals & Mining (IOM3)	
Institute of Water (IWater)	
Institution of Agricultural Engineers (IAgrE)	
Institution of Chemical Engineers (IChemE)	
Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)	
Institution of Engineering Designers (IED)	
Institution of Environmental Sciences (IES)	