

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Coventry, England (9th September 2017)

Environmental Policy Forum Press Release

The Society for the Environment partnered with seven other professional bodies*, as part of the Environmental Policy Forum, to warn that the EU Withdrawal Bill is inadequate to deliver Gove's "Green Brexit" vision of healthier environment.

As MPs begin to debate the landmark European Union (Withdrawal) Bill, leading environmental scientists, engineers, ecologists and water and waste experts have called for meaningful parliamentary scrutiny of environmental policies and laws.

Whilst the Conservative Government committed in its manifesto to "be the first generation to leave the environment in a better state than it inherited" and Environment Secretary Michael Gove has talked of his ambition for a "Green Brexit", a range of professional bodies have warned that the EU Withdrawal Bill "gravely threatens" the ability to achieve either.

In letters to Michael Gove and David Davis, the institutes have warned that the Bill fails to adequately provide for parliamentary scrutiny of the raft of changes required to make environmental laws function, ensure the fundamental principles which underpin decades of environmental improvement are protected, or provide a meaningful framework for independent scrutiny of future Government performance on the environment. They also warned that devolved administrations should not be constrained from pursuing ambitious environmental policies and targets of their own as a result of the powers the Bill creates.

The bodies have called for the legal establishment of a new body, answerable to Parliament and fully independent of Government which would help provide the kind of scrutiny currently provided by the European Commission. In the past this has allowed citizens and organisations to take governments to court over failing to meet legal obligations such as on air quality. The bodies have also called for parliamentary committees to rubber stamp or call in for scrutiny the large number of laws which Ministers can approve, under so called 'Henry VIII powers', as EU laws are made workable in the UK.

Environmental Policy Forum Chair, Professor Will Pope said "the Government has welcome ambitions for the environment, with a new 25 year plan imminent and a commitment to improve environmental quality for future generations. Yet plans without appropriate tools and measures for delivery and scrutiny will be doomed to failure. Brexit offers certain opportunities to manage our environment in a more effective manner, more bespoke to UK needs. Yet it also presents real risks that measures which have achieved cleaner rivers, seas, towns and cities could be eroded. We are calling for appropriate checks and balances to be established from the outset, to ensure we do not risk becoming the 'dirty man of Europe' again".

A copy of the Environmental Policy Forum's EU Withdrawal Briefing can be found at www.socenv.org.uk/EPF.

*IEMA, the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM), the Institution of Environmental Sciences (IES), the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management

(CIEEM), the chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM), the Institute of Fisheries Management (IFM) and the Landscape Institute.

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NOTES TO EDITOR:

1. The Environmental Policy Forum (EPF) is a network of UK environmental professional bodies promoting environmental sustainability and resilience for the public benefit. The EPF's member bodies have a collective membership of around 70,000 environmental professionals, many of whom are individually chartered in environmental practice, science and engineering disciplines.
2. The briefing sent to Ministers can be found at www.socenv.org.uk/EPF
3. CIWEM (the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management), is the leading independent Chartered professional body for water and environment professionals, promoting excellence within the sector. www.ciwem.org
4. The Society for the Environment is comprised of 24 Licenced Bodies, with over 500,000 members between them. It received a Royal Charter in 2004, which empowers it to regulate the Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv) and Registered Environmental Technician (REnvTech) registration in the UK. There are now over 7,000 environmental professionals currently registered who share a common vision of delivering sustainability through environmental professionalism. www.socenv.org.uk
5. The Institution of Environmental Sciences (IES) is a membership organisation that represents professionals from fields as diverse as air quality, land contamination and education - wherever you find environmental work underpinned by science. A visionary organisation leading debate, dissemination and promotion of environmental science and sustainability, the IES promotes an evidence-based approach to decision and policy making. www.the-ies.org
6. CIWM (the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management) is the leading professional body for the waste management sector representing around 6,000 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. www.ciwm.co.uk
7. The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) is the leading professional membership body representing and supporting 5,000 ecologists and environmental managers in the UK, Ireland and abroad. Our Vision is of a society which values the natural

environment and recognises the contribution of professional ecologists and environmental managers to its conservation. www.cieem.net

8. IEMA is the membership body for more than 14,000 environment and sustainability professionals worldwide. We support individuals and organisations in setting and achieving globally recognised standards for sustainable practice, in turn driving the development and uptake of sustainability skills. We add value for our members by providing the knowledge, connections and recognition necessary to lead change within organisations at all levels. We are independent and international. We apply the combined expertise of our members to provide evidence and influence decision-making, working towards our vision of transforming the world to sustainability. www.iema.net
9. The Institute of Fisheries Management (IFM) is an international organisation of people sharing a common interest in the modern management of recreational and commercial fisheries. www.ifm.org.uk
10. The Landscape Institute is the chartered body for the landscape profession. It is an educational charity working to promote the art and science of landscape practice. The LI's aim, through the work of its members, is to protect, conserve and enhance the natural and built environment for the public benefit. The Landscape Institute provides a professional home for all landscape practitioners including landscape scientists, landscape planners, landscape architects, landscape managers and urban designers. www.landscapeinstitute.org