



**Eighth Meeting Of  
The British- Irish Council  
(Environment Sectoral Group)**

The British-Irish Council Environment Group held its eighth Ministerial meeting in Clondeboye Estate, Bangor, Northern Ireland today. The meeting was part of an ongoing series of meetings within the British-Irish Council (BIC) since the Council's inaugural meeting of 17 December 1999, which identified the environment as one of the issues for discussion.

The BIC, established under the Agreement reached in the Multi-Party Negotiations in Belfast in 1998, is a forum for its members to exchange information, discuss, consult, and use best endeavours to reach agreement on cooperation on matters of mutual interest within the competence of the relevant Administrations.

The British Government was represented by Joan Ruddock MP, Minister for Climate Change, Biodiversity and Waste, who also chaired the meeting. Arlene Foster MLA, Minister of the Environment was accompanied by Margaret Ritchie MLA, Minister for Social Development both represented the Northern Ireland Executive. The Irish Government was represented by John Gormley TD, Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Guernsey was represented by Deputy David de G de Lisle, PhD., Minister for Environment Department. The Welsh Assembly Government was represented by Jane Davidson AM, Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing; the Scottish Government by Michael Russell MSP, Minister for Environment; the Isle of Man by John Shimmin MHK, Minister for Local Government and the Environment, and Jersey by Senator Freddie Cohen, Minister for Planning and the Environment.

A full list of delegation members is attached.

The meeting considered an update paper outlining the 'Climate Change Adaptation Work Programme' produced by the British Government, which updated the climate change work topics agreed at the BIC Environment Ministerial held in Guernsey on 26 July 2006.

**Climate Change**

Mr Roger Street, Technical Director of UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP) gave a presentation on Climate Change Update. The presentation explored the launch of a fifth

generation set of climate scenarios – UKCIP08 - which will be entirely different than the generation of scenarios that preceded it. UKCIP08 will be a more comprehensive package of climate information. The informative and the accessible nature of UKCIP08 should allow users to more effectively assess the potential impacts of climate change and effective responses.

### **Renewable Fuels and Materials Programme**

Dr Jeremy Tomkinson, CEO of The National Non-Food Crops Centre (NNFCC), on behalf of Defra<sup>[1]</sup>, gave a presentation on renewable fuels and materials programme. The Defra/BERR<sup>[2]</sup> Renewable Fuels and Materials Strategy was published in November 2004, and reviewed and updated in 2007. It covers all renewable materials derived from crops and animals, for industrial use, for bio-energy and for transport.

### **Integrated Coastal Zone Management**

The UK Government presented a paper on the work of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Working Group. Ministers were updated on the progress of developing ICZM national strategies. The paper covered a number of recent developments in the field.

Having considered various integrated coastal zone management and coastal integration issues and strategies, Ministers agreed that each Member Administration should continue to share ideas and ensure coordination between individual coastal policies and strategies, through the BIC ICZM sub group, and by other means where appropriate.

### **Sellafield and Radioactive Waste**

Ireland indicated that officials from the Irish and Manx governments are currently working on the structure and content of a revised joint discussion paper on Sellafield and radioactive waste. The paper will address current operations at Sellafield, the safety of those operations, the final disposal of radioactive waste and the control of environmental discharges.

### **Fishing for Litter Initiative**

Isle of Man presented a paper and a short film on Fishing for Litter (FFL) that facilitated discussion on the merits of encouraging this initiative on the BIC (E) region. The initiative has been highlighted as an environmental one to help resolve the problem of marine litter and is not a fishing initiative. This is seen as a response to the problem of the negative impact of marine litter and also the significant detrimental economic effect on coastal communities.

Ministers agreed to support the concept of the Fishing for Litter initiative and agreed to ask the appropriate departments in each Member Administration to look at the feasibility and potential cost to the fishing industry and departments of developing and implementing FFLs in their own jurisdiction.

### **Future Work Areas**

The Group discussed the results of the BIC Environment work review. A number of issues were explored around the future of working arrangements, frequency of BIC (E) meetings, how to develop common areas of interest, and ensure clear and defined outputs that add real value to the policy development within a joined-up approach.

## **Conclusions**

The meeting concluded that: the adaptation work programme continues and the Environment Group receives further updates next year; Ireland submit their joint discussion paper on Sellafield and radioactive waste; more supporting analysis is provided on the cost issues of the Fishing for Litter project with officials to explore these and agree a way forward, and Member Administrations to continue to share ideas and ensure coordination between individual coastal policies and strategies.

It was agreed that among the main items for discussion at the next meeting of the Group would include: Waste, Climate Change; Sellafield and radioactive waste; ICZM.

The Group welcomed and noted that the ninth Ministerial meeting of the BIC Environment will take place in Jersey in 2009.

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<sup>[1]</sup> UK's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

<sup>[2]</sup> UK's Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform

## BRITISH IRISH COUNCIL (ENVIRONMENT SECTORAL GROUP)

### List of Delegates

Friday 1st February 2008

<b><u>British Government</u></b>	
Minister for Climate Change, Biodiversity and Waste	Joan Ruddock MP
Director General, Climate Change Group (Defra)	Mike Anderson
Head of International Policy (Defra)	Martin Hum PhD
Technical Director, UK Climate Impacts Programme	Roger Street
CEO, National Non-Food Crops Centre	Dr Jeremy Tomkinson
Policy Advisor, EU and UK Climate Change Adaptation (Defra)	Caroline Cowan
Policy Advisor, Marine Planning and Coastal Integration (Defra)	Pamela Whaley
Policy Co-ordinator	Lee Hossain
Assistant Policy Co-ordinator	Colleen Burkill
<b><u>Irish Government</u></b>	
Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	John Gormley TD
Assistant Secretary, Environment Division	Tom O'Mahony
North South Co-ordinator	Niamh Gallagher
<b><u>Northern Ireland Executive</u></b>	
Minister of the Environment	Arlene Foster MLA
Minister for Social Development	Margaret Ritchie MLA
Deputy Secretary, Local Government and Environmental Policy	Paul Simpson
Director, Climate Change and Waste Management Division	Wesley Shannon
Central Policy and Co-ordination Division	John Ball
BIC Environment Sector Northern Ireland Co-ordinator	Coral Cullen
<b><u>Welsh Assembly Government</u></b>	
Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing	Jane Davidson AM
Policy Advisor, Climate Change and Water Division	Steve Lloyd
<b><u>Scottish Government</u></b>	
Minister for Environment	Michael Russell MSP
Head of International Environment Issues	Andrew Mackie
<b><u>Government of the Isle of Man</u></b>	

Minister for Local Government and the Environment	(Hon) John Shimmin MHK
Director of Environment, Safety and Health	Martin Hall
<b><u>Jersey</u></b>	
Minister for Planning and the Environment	Senator Freddie Cohen
Director for the Environment	Chris Newton
<b><u>Guernsey</u></b>	
Minister for Environment Department	Deputy David de G de Lisle, PhD.

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