



**Ministerial Meeting of the Sectoral Group on Environment
17th April 2009**

Communiqué

The British-Irish Council Environment Group held its ninth Ministerial meeting at Mont Orgueil Castle, St. Helier, Jersey today.

The British-Irish Council was established under Strand Three of the Agreement reached in Belfast on Good Friday 1998 as a forum for its members to exchange information, discuss, consult, and use best endeavours to reach agreement on co-operation on matters of mutual interest within the competence of the relevant Administrations. The British-Irish Council identified the environment as an important workstrand at the first meeting in December 1999.

The UK Government was represented by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath, Minister for Sustainable Development and Energy Innovation and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords, who chaired the meeting. Sammy Wilson, MP, MLA, Minister for the Environment was accompanied by Conor Murphy, MP, MLA, Minister for Regional Development both represented the Northern Ireland Executive. The Irish Government was represented by Michéal Kitt TD, Minister of State, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. Jersey was represented by Senator Freddie Cohen, Minister for Planning and Environment. Guernsey was represented by Deputy Peter Sirett, Minister for the Environment Department. The Welsh Assembly Government was represented by Jane Davidson AM, Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing. The Scottish Executive was represented by Stewart Stevenson MSP, Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change and the Isle of Man by John Shimmin MHK, Minister for Local Government and the Environment.

A full list of delegation members is attached.

Creation of Energy Workstream

The Ministers reflected briefly on the creation of a new BIC workstream, which will focus on Energy. Ministers understood the need to ensure that the two workstreams remained as separate entities, but recognised the need for each workstream to be kept abreast of developments in the other so that impacts and synergies could be identified.

Climate Change

Professor John Mitchell from the Met Office's Hadley Centre gave a presentation updating the group on current climate change science. The group was also given an update on the UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP) ahead of the launch this summer of the sixth generation of climate scenarios. The remainder of the discussion focused on what the group could do collectively to support the adaptation programme, and on how the administrations might best use the UKCIP data to support their own programmes on adaptation.

Sellafield and Radioactive Waste

Ireland indicated that Officials from the Irish and Manx Governments are close to completing a revised joint 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. It is expected to be ready for discussion at the next Ministerial level meeting.

Marine

The Ministers considered update papers on both the Fishing for Litter Initiative and from the sub-group on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM). Marine has been agreed as the theme for the 2010 Ministerial Meeting and, to that end Ministers were provided with a paper setting out where administrations had been able to work together on marine issues in the past. The paper put marine issues into context and reflected on the mechanisms for outputs. The group discussed how best to work together over the next twelve months, and agreed a set of actions which will be reviewed in 2010 as part of the workplan for that Ministerial.

Future Work Areas

The Ministers also discussed and agreed the themes for the 2011 and 2012 meetings, which will be waste and biodiversity respectively.

Conclusions

The meeting concluded that the adaptation work programme continues and further updates are given next year; there will be a review of the work programme on marine as agreed at the meeting to include Fishing for Litter progress report; Ireland will submit their joint discussion paper on Sellafield and

radioactive waste; and there would be a paper on waste outlining areas of cooperation in preparation for the waste themed event in 2011.

The Ministers welcomed and noted that the tenth Ministerial meeting of the BIC Environment will take place in London in 2010.

List of Delegates

UK Government	
Minister for Sustainable Development and Energy Innovation and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords	Lord Hunt of Kings Heath
Director General, Strategy and Evidence Group (Defra)	Bill Stow
Private Secretary to Lord Hunt (Defra)	Amelia Munn
Adapting to Climate Change Project Team (Defra)	Kathryn Packer
Marine Strategy Framework Directive Team (Defra)	Paul Riches
Director of Climate Science, Met Office, Hadley Centre	Professor John Mitchell
British-Irish Council Environment Secretariat (Defra)	Linda Kiff and Kevin Carter
Irish Government	
Minister of State, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Mr Michéal Kitt TD
Private Secretary to Michéal Kitt	Aisling Glynn
Assistant Secretary General, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Tom O'Mahony
BIC Environment workstrand official, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Aidan Kinch
Northern Ireland Executive	
Minister of the Environment	Sammy Wilson MP, MLA
Minister for Regional Development	Conor Murphy MP, MLA
Head of Climate Change Unit, Dept of Environment	Brendan Forde
BIC Environment workstrand official, Department of the Environment	Coral Cullen
Special Adviser to Sammy Wilson	Graham Craig
Special Adviser to Conor Murphy	Steven McGlade
Welsh Assembly Government	
Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing	Jane Davidson AM
Director, Department for Environment, Sustainability and Housing	Matthew Quinn
Scottish Government	
Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change	Stewart Stevenson MSP
Private Secretary	Jessica Tattersall
Business Manager, Climate Change and Water Industry Directorate	Gabby Pieraccini
Deputy Director, Climate Change	Philip Wright

Government of the Isle of Man	
Minister for Local Government and the Environment	Hon John Shimmin MHK
Director of Environment, Safety and Health	Martin Hall
Jersey	
Minister for Planning and Environment	Senator Freddie Cohen
Chief Executive Officer, Planning and Environment Department	Andrew Scate
Director of Environment	Chris Newton
Assistant Director, Environment Department	Louise Magris
Environment Department	Kelly Johnson
Guernsey	
Minister, Environment Department	Deputy Peter Sirett
Director of Transport & Environment Services, Environment Dept	Chris Hurley