



environmental
protection uk

Annual Conference 2019:

Delivering a better environment for the UK?

Challenges for a new and effective environmental framework

EPUK Recommendations for an Environment Bill

Sarah Legge
Chair of the Air Quality Committee

Developing our Recommendations

- EPUK has positively supported and promoted pollution reduction policies and practices since its inception over 120 years ago. We have long been a critical friend to government.
- We found some core issues that were repeatedly unaddressed in environmental legislation, strategies and programmes.
- We prepared a 1-page briefing on the fundamental principles we believe need to be covered any environment legislation.
- Further detail in a 2-page briefing on air quality specific issues.
- Land and noise committees planning to develop specific briefings.

A strong and independent oversight body

- With power to legally require effective action to improve the environment and protect health,
- Ensure compliance with legal duties
- Oversight of central government and all public bodies
- Implement consequences of equal strength to the current system (including EU fines for non-compliance).
- This should be fully funded (but not at expense of other environmental bodies and work).

Fully integrate environmental protection principles and rights into UK law

- Including the EU treaties and directives, and non-EU commitments
- This should apply to the functions of all public bodies
- Including rights to access environmental information, participate in environmental decision making and access to justice in environmental matters.
- To prevent any 'roll-back' in environmental protection, non-regression should be included.

Set stringent and non-regressive targets for environmental protection

- Supporting legislation must have sufficient flexibility to address emerging issues and new scientific evidence
- With support to go beyond these to deliver further health benefits.
- These should keep up with the most stringent of WHO and other international standards and timescales going forward.
- Monitoring requirements should stay (at least) in line with the European and other international requirements. We recommend that the UK retain membership of the European Environment Agency.

All parts of government must take action wherever they have control or influence on pollution impacts and sources.

- a) National government must provide:
 - national narrative and political priority;
 - action on overarching and widespread problems;
 - support for others to take appropriate action;
 - NB not limited to Defra, or “environmental” work
- b) regional authorities and other bodies must:
 - take action to address pollution from sources they influence or control;
- c) local authorities must:
 - address local issues; and
 - local implementation of wider measures
 - (with appropriate political, financial and expert support).

And the action must be quantified and the responsibility enforced.

Air Quality Issues: Vision and Action

- Set an ambitious strategic vision for clean air, and make clean air a political priority across all departments & levels of government.
- Prioritise action to cut early deaths and ill health, reduce the cost burden on the NHS, and deliver the maximum health benefits.
- Ensure that everyone with the ability to influence air pollution impacts and pollution sources has the responsibility to take action.
- Take action nationally to address common pollution sources and locally in hotspots of pollution and exposure.

Air Quality Issues: Targets

- The legislation should establish a target setting framework, with quantified targets for pollutant emission & concentration reductions, for all key pollutants (and flexibility for new ones, e.g. ultrafines?).
- As a minimum these should be based on meeting the WHO guidelines for PM_{2.5} by 2030 (& then keep up with the most stringent globally).
- Defra should analyse and translate the overarching targets into binding requirements on all relevant bodies, who then decide on the route to target delivery.
- The oversight body should audit & enforce delivery of these targets.

Air Quality Issues: Links with other work

- Harmonise and maximise benefits of the air quality and climate change strategies and programmes, as the two issues are closely linked, with reduced combustion emissions a key pillar for both.
- Actively pursue air pollution emissions reductions from all other policy delivery schemes. Focus government programmes with air pollution impacts to target areas of high pollution, and address work with negative impacts.
- Support innovation, including R&D, and a strategy orientated towards cleaner technology and a more sustainable economy.

Air Quality Issues: What do LAs need?

- Local authorities (and other public bodies) must have
 - political support,
 - expertise*
 - adequate resources,
 - powers

to develop and implement effective local action, ideally as part of a fully integrated & coordinated national strategy.

- Build on the best points of Local Air Quality Management and Clean Air Zones regimes, and share best practice.
- Support to go beyond targets deliver further health benefits.



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Other Air Quality Committee Work

National Government AQ work: Environment Bill, Air Quality Strategy, National Plan on NO₂ and Clean Air Zones

Voice to Government and Parliament: Select Committee Inquiries, All Party Parliamentary Group on Air Pollution, DoH and PHE events

Development Control: EPUK/IAQM Guidance, National Planning Policy Framework Reviews

Working with others: Heathy Air Campaign, Clean Air Day, PHE events, Air Quality & Emissions Show, Single Issue meetings (indoor AQ, low cost sensors), GLA International Conference, ClientEarth Workshops



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Next steps?

Noting 'uncertainty' around government, Brexit and future environmental legislation.

Expand to include other specific environmental issues.

Working with other charities and organisations.

Planning Ministerial and government meetings.

Conference is a chance for all members to contribute and raise issues.

For briefing and more info, see www.environmental-protection.org.uk