

RCP (09) 6th Meeting

ROYAL COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION

Minutes of a meeting held from 4th to 5th June 2009 at the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining, London

Chair

Sir John Lawton

Members

Professor Nick Cumpsty
Dr Ian Graham-Bryce
Professor Maria Lee
Professor Peter Matthews
Professor Steve Rayner
Professor Joanne Scott

Professor Michael Depledge
Professor Jeffrey Jowell
Professor Peter Liss
Professor Judith Petts
Professor Michael Roberts
Professor Lynda Warren

Economic Adviser

Professor Gordon MacKerron

Secretariat

Tom Eddy
Noel Nelson
Yolanda Rizzi

Jon Freeman
Laura Pleasants
Rachael Yokoo-Laurence

Representative from the Scottish Government

Madeleine Cusack

Observers from Defra

Mark Filley
Nicky Gee

John Garrod
John Roberts (Secretariat designate)

A list of all ACTIONS agreed at this meeting is at **Annex 1**.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Item 1: Preliminary business

1. Apologies were received from *Professor Petts* for Thursday morning, and from *Professor Cumpsty, Professor Jowell, Professor Scott* and *Professor Rayner* for dinner.
2. *The Chairman* drew Members attention to the new RCEP website which was launched at the beginning of June.

3. *The Secretary*, noted that the Government had published a formal response to the RCEP's report on Novel Materials, and that it had been tabled for Members. He invited Members to submit any comments on the document by 8th June. *Action point:*
 - Members to provide comments on the Government response to the Novel Materials report by 8th June 2009.

Item 2: RCP(09)5th: Draft minutes of the June 2009 meeting

4. Amendments to the minutes were suggested by Members and incorporated by the Secretariat.

ADAPTATION STUDY

Item 3: RCP(09)290: Project Status Report

5. *Jon Freeman* reported that the report would be signed off at the September meeting. He reported that the contracted work on legal issues had been received and that the Town and Country Planning Association would be undertaking a review of the powers and duties in the planning system to enable adaptation to climate change. The TCPA will also be organising a workshop to explore the issues, arranged for 28th July. It was also reported that peer reviewers would be sent draft copies of the report in mid-July, and that ideas for the front and back covers of the report would be presented to Members for discussion at the July meeting.

Item 4: RCP(09)288: Legal Liabilities for Coastal Erosion and Flooding in the UK due to Climate Change

6. Members discussed this paper and noted that the legal liabilities with regard to managed re-alignment are an example of a potentially insufficiently flexible system.

Item 5: RCP(09): Water Resources Strategy

7. Members noted that this paper is a useful document designed to improve the provision of water services in England, and provides some evidence of maladapted institutions or pieces of legislation.

Item 6: RCP(09)296: Defra Floods and Water Management Bill

8. *Noel Nelson* introduced this paper. He noted that it provided an example of a streamlined risk management approach to flooding and coastal erosion and pointed out how the remit of the Environment Agency will change. Members discussed issues of accountability and flexibility with respect to new legislation relating to adaptation to climate change.

Item 7: RCP(09)284: Preparation for July Oral Evidence – Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

9. Members noted this paper and suggested changes to the questions.

Item 8: RCP(09)285: Preparation for July Oral Evidence - Department for Communities and Local Government

Item 9: RCP(09)282: Preparation for July Oral Evidence – Environment Agency, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Northern Ireland Environment Agency

10. Members noted these papers.

Item 10: Oral Evidence – Environment Agency, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Northern Ireland Environment Agency

11. A transcript of the session will be made publically available (via the RCEP website) following publication of the adaptation report.

Item 11: RCP(09)291 - Terminology Paper

12. Members noted this paper and noted the importance of using plain English.

Item 12: RCP(09)293 - Principles for Adaptation

13. *Jon Freeman* introduced this paper and drew Members' attention to a series of tabled papers describing 'principles for adaptation'. Members agreed it was going to be necessary to document the RCEP's essential considerations for successful adaptation.

Item 13: RCP(09)297 - Storyline for the Adaptation report

14. Members discussed the current structure of the report. Members defined a set of high level challenges that they see as priorities to be addressed to enable successful adaptation.

Item 14: RCP(09)292: Chapter 2 – Effects, Vulnerabilities and Opportunities

Item 15: RCP(09)287: Chapter 3 – Reducing Vulnerabilities and Taking Opportunities

Item 16: RCP(09)287: Chapter 4 – Participation, Engagement and Debate

Item 17: RCP(09)294: Chapter 1 - Introduction

15. Members had a discussion around the draft text of the report.

Item 18: RCP(09)109: Preparation for dinner guest: Nick Herbert MP

16. Members noted this paper.

DEMOGRAPHICS STUDY

Item 19: RCP(09)802: Demographic trends article

Item 20: RCP(09)803: Interim report on responses to call for information

Item 21: RCP(09)804: Outline timetable

Item 22: RCP(09)805: Report of discussion with Town and Country Planning Association

Item 23: RCP(09)806: "Greener and Wiser"

17. *Yolanda Rizzi* drew Members' attention to the response to the call for information received from the Optimum Population Trust after paper RCP(09)803 had been circulated.

18. Members noted the papers and had a broad discussion about the potential future direction of the study. It would be important to reach a view on the extent to which the study should consider non-UK impacts: it was agreed that these should at least be flagged up, though it was noted that it might not be possible to examine them in depth.

19. Members noted the outline timetable and agreed it would be useful to hold a seminar for a wide range of interested groups, probably in December. Members considered it important to hear separately from experts in the fields of demographics, migration and ageing, preferably in advance of the general seminar.

SHORT STUDY ON LIGHT

Item 24: RCP(09) 510: Draft report

20. Members discussed the report and agreed that *Professors Depledge* and *Rayner* would work on the draft text with a view to signing off the report in July. *Action point:*

- Professors Rayner and Depledge to revise draft text.

ADAPTATION REPORT

Item 25: RCP(09)289: Preparing for a changing climate: Second consultation to inform Scotland's Climate Change Adaptation framework

21. *Madeleine Cusack* commented that this paper highlighted the role the Scottish Government has to play in adaptation to climate change and it served to outline how the Scottish Government would work with specific sectors to achieve effective adaptation. The consultation on the paper runs until the end of July and the key focus is to populate the action programme, which arises from the strategic document.

Item 26: RCP(09)283: TUC Study – Changing Work in a Changing Climate

22. Members noted that this paper was prepared for the TUC by the consultancy firm AEA. The paper demonstrates the private sector view of adaptation and demonstrates that the actors and forces driving adaptation are weak. Members noted the data on local authorities was helpful – particularly the survey on page 32 relating to ‘internal awareness raising’ – Members were keen to see this survey in its entirety. Members expressed an interest in speaking to Dr. Richenda Connell of Acclimatise with regards to her work on adaptation to climate change. *Action points:*
- Secretariat to obtain survey data
 - Secretariat to invite Dr Richenda Connell to lunch at the 14 July drafting meeting

Item 27: RCP(09)298: Biodiversity Management in the face of climate change

23. Members noted that this paper focussed on site management rather than species management, but it did address some of the issues of how one practically carries out effective adaptation. Members noted that there is no explanation of why we would want to conserve a particular site or habitat.

Item 28: RCP(09)254: Rationales for adaptation in EU climate change policies

24. Members noted that this paper provided some examples of the web of constraint and could be used to introduce some of the issues encountered when dealing with adaptation to climate change.

Item 29: RCP(09)255: EU report – Impact of Europe’s Changing Climate – 2008 Indicator Assessment

25. Members noted this paper provided information on climate change impact effects and issues of developing indicators for monitoring progress on adaptation, which is of relevance to the RCEP’s interest in monitoring adaptive capacity. Members discussed the usefulness of process-based indicators, concluding that process-based indicators were useful as they demonstrated movement in the right direction.

Item 29: RCP(09)258: Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Health check – November 2008

26. Members discussed the plans to do away with five agricultural schemes in Wales and replace them with one, and whether this would make the scheme more flexible and therefore easier for farmers to cope with climate change. Members agreed that as the CAP was a significant driver of land use change the CAP needed to have adaptive capacity built into it.

Item 30: RCP(09)257: Social justice in coastal erosion management: the temporal and spatial dimensions

27. Members noted this paper was about global equity and therefore not directly relevant to the work of the RCEP. Members agreed that 'uneven distribution of impacts [of climate change]' was a better definition than 'justice'. Members also noted the figure that quoted 25,000 homes on the Scottish coast were at risk from coastal flooding. These homes however, were insurable, unlike the homes at Happisburgh at risk from coastal erosion/flooding.

Item 31: RCP(09)256: SCOPAC – Preparing for the impacts of climate change

28. This paper makes reference to the future of shoreline management plans (SMPs). The Members were drawn to a figure depicting the multiplicity of scales – the temporal and spatial elements and commented that it could be used in setting the scene in the RCEP report. Members had a discussion about SMPs, commenting that they were strategic aspirations rather than management plans. Members agreed that the SMP system was a good idea in principle but its delivery had been mishandled in some instances. SMPs were also an example of the multi-level governance problem – there are many stakeholders involved but ultimately funds from the public purse are not available to address the issue.

Item 32: RCP(09)277: Written response from the IRM

29. Members noted this paper.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Item 33: RCP(09)108: EEAC Statement

30. *The Secretary* introduced this paper. Members were invited to state whether they were content to endorse the joint EEAC statement on trans-European networks. The Members decided not to endorse the statement. Members had a brief discussion around the benefits of being a member of the EEAC, and *The Chairman* asked the *Secretariat* to prepare a paper on this subject. *Action point:*

- Secretariat to prepare a paper on the RCEP membership of EEAC.

ADAPTATION STUDY

Item 31: RCP(09)283: Preparation for Oral Evidence – Civil Contingencies Secretariat

31. Members noted this paper.

Item 32: Oral Evidence – Civil Contingencies Secretariat

32. A transcript of the session will be made publically available (via the RCEP website) following publication of the adaptation report.

ANNEX 1

List of Actions agreed at the Commission's meeting on 4th to 5th June 2009

Action Number	Action	By Whom
1	Members to provide comments on the Government response to the Novel Materials report by 8 th June 2009.	Members
2	Professors Rayner and Depledge to revise draft text of the light report	Professors Rayner and Depledge
3	Secretariat to obtain survey data from TUC paper	Secretariat
4	Secretariat to invite Dr Richenda Connell to the 14 July drafting meeting	Secretariat
5	Secretariat to prepare a paper on the RCEP membership of EEAC	Secretariat