



Environmental Audit Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

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Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP
COP President Designate
Cabinet Office
9 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AG

By email only

25th March 2021

Dear Alok –

Thank you for appearing before the Environmental Audit Committee, meeting together with Chairs and members of nine other select committees, on 11th March to discuss the machinery of government arrangements supporting you as COP President Designate as you prepare for the 26th Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC. Please pass on our thanks to Peter Hill, Ros Eales and John Murton for their contributions to the session.

I enclose the transcript of the evidence session, which has now been posted to the Committee's website. I hope you found the session constructive and the process of preparation valuable.

I would particularly like to thank you and your team for your positive response to the collaborative select committee arrangements which I and my colleagues proposed in our letter of 12th February, and indeed for the assistance given in the arrangements for the 11th March meeting. I very much welcome your decision to recognise this arrangement in the substantial Written Ministerial Statement you made to the House on 18th March setting out how you intend to discharge your responsibilities and how the machinery of government is supporting you. Openness to constructive challenge and scrutiny sets an excellent example of a means to build and sustain a genuine consensus on the measures needed to deliver net zero.

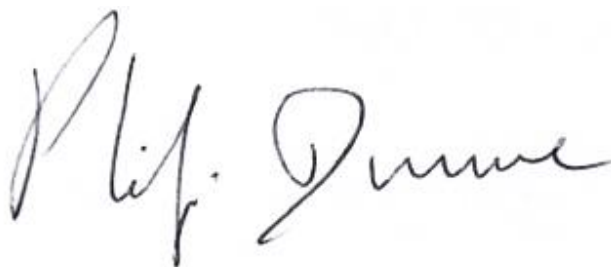
It is good to note that arrangements have already been made for Rt Hon Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP to appear before the Scottish Affairs Committee and guesting Members on 29th April to discuss the practical arrangements being made for the conference in Glasgow in November. I know that you will personally wish to appear before select committees as much as possible where your travel schedule permits it.

Because of the format of the evidence session on 11th March, a number of colleagues did not have the opportunity to put to you all the questions they wished. You indicated that you would seek to answer these additional questions, and that you would write with supplementary information on some points.

The questions and additional points are set out in the annex to this letter. It would be helpful if you would arrange to respond by **Monday 12th April**; my Committee plans to publish this correspondence once an answer is received.

A copy of this letter goes to the Chair of each committee represented at the meeting on 11th March.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Philip Dunne'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Philip' and the last name 'Dunne' clearly distinguishable.

Rt Hon Philip Dunne MP
Chairman of the Environmental Audit Committee

ANNEX: additional questions from members of participating Committees

Chris Law MP, International Development Committee

- What structures are already established, including within the Cabinet Office and other departments, to reach out to the least developed countries (LDCs) to shape the agenda ahead of COP26;
 - How many people are working on this; how senior they are; where in Government they sit; and who leads on this work;
- What have you learned about the needs of the LDCs at COP26 from your visits as COP President Designate;
- How many UK representatives abroad (either in High Commissions and Embassies but also through the UK representation in the United Nations and other multi-lateral bodies) are helping you to prepare for COP26;
- What level of engagement has there been, through FCDO diplomats, with LDCs on COP26 planning and delivery;
- The International Development Committee previously recommended that climate change is a strategic priority that is to be integrated into all aid spending and that climate justice should be explicitly adopted. How is this being conveyed and implemented in preparation for COP26?

Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Science and Technology Committee

- Do you plan to appoint a Chief Scientific Adviser or retain a dedicated Chief Scientific Adviser to advise you as COP President;
- Whether the scientific funding for climate research being provided from the UK's Official Development Assistance is to continue at the levels planned before the outcome of the 2020 Spending Review; whether any reductions are now planned or expected; and whether such funding is to be separately provided, or to be found from the existing budget of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy or elsewhere?

Anthony Browne MP, Treasury Committee

- The Treasury has implemented policies to help green finance: green gilts, the green remit for the Monetary Policy Committee and, most importantly, making climate-related financial disclosures mandatory. What further proposals to green the international finance system are you contemplating as COP President Designate?