



HOUSE OF LORDS

Common Frameworks Scrutiny Committee

House of Lords

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The Rt Hon George Eustice MP
Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs
Seacole Building
2 Marsham St
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Dear George,

Thank you for your letter of 14 May which addressed most of the Committee's questions on the Agricultural Support and Animal Health and Welfare framework summaries. Thank you also for the summaries of the Air Quality, Best Available Techniques, and Chemicals and Pesticides frameworks which were considered by the Committee on 18 May.

I would like to confirm the Committee's intention to scrutinise all three frameworks. However, given the uncertainty of when the provisional frameworks will be published, and how many other frameworks might be published at the same time, we reserve the right to extend our scrutiny beyond 21 sitting days if required.

We also acknowledge your letter of 14 May which stated that interactions between the frameworks and the significant cross-cutting issues are still being worked through. A clear example of where we predict significant tensions as a result of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland concerns the banning of certain plant protection products by the EU such as Roundup. This is a case study we highlighted in our recent report following concerns expressed to us that as the UK is likely to continue using Roundup, it could result in arable farmers in Northern Ireland being placed at a disadvantage. We look forward to receiving more detail on how such interactions with these significant cross-cutting issues will be resolved. However, there are a few areas within all three summaries where we would welcome additional clarity before receiving the Provisional Frameworks.

Regarding the Air Quality Summary, with respect to agreeing working practices that are already established and those that are new, we note the continued benefit of information sharing, but can you clarify whether any of the other processes mentioned in the summary are already established and which are new?

We also note that the Best Available Techniques Framework will share interactions with the Air Quality Framework with the significant cross-cutting issues the Committee has previously raised, including the Protocol on Ireland/ Northern Ireland, the UK Internal Market Act 2020,

and the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement. How much coordination will be required between officials and ministers working on both policy areas and what form will this take?

Regarding the Chemicals and Pesticides Summary, we note the UK Chemicals Governance Group is only mentioned with respect to its role in the dispute avoidance and resolution process. Can you clarify whether the Group also has further responsibility within the Framework's processes? Finally, the Summary states that further work to develop this Framework is ongoing due to the need to establish processes for timely and informed decision making "within new UK regulatory regimes". Can we request a timeframe for when work to resolve this matter can expect to be resolved?

We look forward to receiving your response within 10 working days.

Yours sincerely,

Baroness Andrews
Chair of the Common Frameworks Scrutiny Committee