



Royal Society of
Biology

Wildlife and
Countryside

LINK



WEDNESDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2016

The Meeting Rooms, Zoological Society of London,
Regent's Park, London NW1 4RY

AGENDA

Making Brexit work for ecology and conservation science

Chair: Dr Laura Bellingan, Director of Science Policy, Royal Society of Biology

Professor Ken Norris, Director of Science, ZSL
Introduction and welcome

Receive the following communications:

Professor Sir John Beddington CMG FRS, Senior Adviser at the Oxford Martin School
Previously UK Government Chief Scientific Adviser (2008–2013); ZSL President
What is happening to the world?

Professor Sue Hartley, University of York; President, British Ecological Society
Brexit and environmental policy: challenges and opportunities

Dr Elaine King, Director, Wildlife and Countryside Link
Brexit: securing the best outcomes for the natural environment

Professor Graeme Reid, Chairman of the Campaign for Science and Engineering
We know the threats of Brexit: can we find the opportunities?

ABSTRACTS

Making Brexit work for ecology and conservation science

Wednesday 7 September 2016

The Meeting Rooms, The Zoological Society of London, Regent's Park, London NW1 4RY

What is happening to the world?

*Professor Sir John Beddington CMG FRS, Senior Adviser at the Oxford Martin School
Previously UK Government Chief Scientific Adviser (2008–2013); ZSL President*

The talk will address the global challenges and opportunities for ecology and conservation science.

Sir John Beddington was the Government Chief Scientific Adviser and Head of the Government Office for Science between January 2008 and March 2013. He reported directly to the Prime Minister and attended Cabinet Sub-committees and, on occasion, Cabinet. He was Head of Profession for Science and Engineering in Government and founded the Government Science and Engineering Network. He headed the group of Chief Scientific Advisers in Government.

Sir John chaired the National Security Council Science Advisory Group and the Science Advisory Group in Emergencies reporting into the COBR Committee. His experience was in three rather different emergencies: the pandemic influenza outbreak in 2009, the volcanic ash closure of UK air space in 2010 and problems linked to the earthquake and tsunami affecting the nuclear plants in Fukushima in Japan in 2011.

Sir John also directed the Foresight team which had the responsibility to look forward and assess implications for major challenges in the future. Typical timescales ranged from 10 to as much as 40 years. The reports produced by the Foresight team are substantial, typically projects may involve some 400 contributors from around 40 countries. The subjects studied are highly variable and involve substantial multi-disciplinary work.

Since taking up his position, the following reports were published: The Future of Identity (2013); Computer Trading in Financial Markets (2012); Migration and Global Environmental Change (2011); International Dimensions of Climate Change (2011); Global Food and Farming Future (2011); Land Use Futures (2010); Mental Capital and Wellbeing (2008); Sustainable Energy Management and the Built Environment (2008).

Sir John co-chaired with Dame Nancy Rothwell the PM's Council for Science and Technology. This group is the main advisory group to the PM and it produced in the last few years a number of significant reports in response to requests from the PM and Cabinet. Some examples are: The NHS as

a driver for growth (2011), A Vision for UK Research (2010), A national infrastructure for the 21st century (2010), Improving innovation in the water industry: 21st century challenges and opportunities (2009) and How academia and government can work together (2008).

Sir John was involved in heading the UK delegation to a number of joint science and technology commissions with a variety of countries. The key ones were with Japan, Russia, Brazil, China, India, Vietnam and Thailand. In addition, there were clear links with the USA where he interacted regularly with his counterpart, John Holdren, who is the Science Adviser to President Obama.

During 2011, at the request of the World Bank, he chaired an International Commission on Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Change.

Brexit and environmental policy: challenges and opportunities

Professor Sue Hartley, University of York; President, British Ecological Society

The UK's decision to leave the European Union poses clear challenges for ecologists and conservation scientists. Much of our environmental policy and legislation, including protecting species and habitats, currently operates within a framework predominantly shaped by the EU, whilst addressing environmental issues, which do not respect national boundaries, requires effective international collaboration and benefits from shared expertise, data and facilities. But Brexit also presents opportunities, if we are able to seize them: now is the time for mobilising, not mourning!

Whilst there is concern about maintaining existing standards, we also have an opportunity to shape future direction of policy and to retain, or even better, improve upon, current legislation - it is now timely to carefully evaluate our available policy options, and be open to combining best practice from the UK, EU and beyond. Of course this is a difficult challenge in itself – effective policies are hard to design and their success (or otherwise!) even harder to evaluate. Marine policy is a case in point: the fishing industry will expect benefits from Brexit, while conservationists see opportunities for a more sustainable, integrated approach to marine management. There is an urgent need to ensure that policy decisions are informed by the very best ecological science.

The UK is a world leader in the environmental research which supports such evidence-based policy making. As a research community we must engage in the post-Brexit environmental policy debate now: with Government, the public, and with industry. The British Ecological Society will be joining with other organisations to make the case to policymakers that strong international partnerships, and the free movement of people, their expertise and ideas, will be essential if Brexit is to become an opportunity for a better environment for the UK.

Sue Hartley is the Director of the York Environmental Sustainability Institute, an innovative interdisciplinary partnership addressing the key global challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss and threats to food security. Her current research focuses on developing sustainable ways to increase crop resilience to drought, disease and insect pests. She is a co-Investigator at CECAN, an ESRC centre pioneering innovative approaches to policy making and evaluation where food, energy, water and environmental issues intersect. Sue is a member of the BBSRC's Strategic Advisory Panel on Agriculture and Food Security, Chair of the RCUK Sustainable Agriculture Research Innovation Club, a Trustee of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and President of the British Ecological Society.

Brexit: securing the best outcomes for the natural environment

Dr Elaine King, Director, Wildlife and Countryside Link

High quality science is vital in ensuring good decision-making for the protection and management of our natural environment. Inevitably, science is now more important than ever, as the UK embarks on a long and complex process of negotiating its way out of the EU.

Drawing on the expertise of its members, Wildlife and Countryside Link develops shared policies and campaigns, underpinned by strong science and evidence, to effect policy and legislative change for the benefit of people and the natural environment. Examples of where science can influence policy change include: implementing the Government's Natural Environment White Paper; designing and monitoring the effectiveness of agri-environment schemes; the European Commission's 'fitness check' of the Habitats and Birds Directives; development of the National Pollinator Strategy; implementation of the GB Non Native Species Strategy; and the effect of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) on cetaceans.

Brexit presents a range of challenges and opportunities for those of us concerned for the natural environment. The way forward will be to offer the Government effective solutions - stressing the post-Brexit benefits - while also harnessing civil society in holding Government to account. Most importantly, Brexit creates an opportunity for NGOs, scientists and other stakeholders to work even more collaboratively in presenting consistent, powerful messages to decision-makers - underpinned by high quality science and evidence - to secure the very best outcomes for people and the natural environment.

Elaine King is Director at Wildlife and Countryside Link, a coalition of 45 voluntary organisations concerned with the conservation and protection of wildlife and the countryside. Link brings together its member organisations to present a joint sector voice to Government and other decision-makers.

Elaine has a Degree in Applied Biology from Brunel University and a PhD from Bristol University for her research into bovine tuberculosis in cattle and badgers. Previous roles have included Chief Executive of the Badger Trust, which promotes the conservation and protection of badgers. Elaine lives in the Chilterns and is Mum to two young sons, both of which (thankfully!) share her passion for the natural world.

We know the threats of Brexit: can we find the opportunities?

Professor Graeme Reid, Chairman of the Campaign for Science and Engineering

The decision to leave the EU came as a surprise and disappointment to most people in the science and research community. Science and research have been among the most harmonious and productive dimensions of the UK's relationship with the EU and its predecessors over the last 40 years. Brexit takes us towards many uncertainties and risks. How should the science community react to the Brexit agenda? Are there opportunities for science along with the threats? Graeme Reid will explore a few of the strategic options and goals available to the science community as it searches for a response to the referendum result. He will also consider some of the challenges faced by the science community in pursuing these goals

Graeme Reid has spent much of his career at the interface between science and government. He is Chairman of the Campaign for Science and Engineering and Professor of Science and Research Policy at UCL. He was specialist advisor to the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee for their inquiry into Science and the EU in advance of the 2016 referendum on UK membership of the EU.

Graeme is also a Trustee of the Association of Medical Research Charities and Strategic Advisor to the National Centre for Universities and Business. Until March 2014, he was Head of Research Funding in the Department of Business Innovation and Skills, where he had oversight of around £5 billion per annum of research spending through Research Councils and the Higher Education Funding Council for England. He coordinated the bid for the science budget in the coalition Government's 2010 spending review.

Graeme spent the first ten years of his career at the National Engineering Laboratory, near Glasgow. He then moved to Central Government where he held positions in the Treasury, the Cabinet Office, and the DTI before the formation of BIS in 2009.

Graeme has a BSc in Physics and a PhD in Mechanical Engineering. He is a Chartered Engineer, a Fellow of the Institute of Physics and a Fellow of the Institution of Engineering and Technology. He has served on Boards and advisory Committees in a range of organisations including CERN, the Scottish Funding Council, Cardiff University and the Institute of Physics.

Chair

Dr Laura Bellingan, Director of Science Policy, Royal Society of Biology

Laura Bellingan is Director of Science Policy at the Royal Society of Biology, overseeing science policy advice activities of the RSB which engages with government, funding agencies, academia, industry, education and the public sphere. She is interested in public use of science and its governance, and works to promote the use of biological knowledge in policy development and implementation. Her post-doctoral research looked at human inflammatory cell biology, and she focused on science and culture for her masters studies.