

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FORUM

**c/o The Institution of Environmental Sciences
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**Rt. Hon. Owen Paterson MP
Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR**

9th May 2013

Dear Secretary of State,

The Environmental Policy Forum (EPF) is a network of UK environmental professional bodies promoting environmental sustainability and resilience for the public benefit. The EPF's member bodies have a collective membership of around 40,000 environmental professionals – many of whom are individually chartered in environmental practice and science disciplines.

We welcome the ruling of the Supreme Court of 1st May, recognising that the United Kingdom is in breach of its obligations to comply with the nitrogen dioxide limit values provided for in Article 13 of Directive 2008/50/EC ("the Air Quality Directive").

There are serious public health implications, reductions in quality life years and increased costs for the National Health Service associated with non-compliance. Each year, around 29,000 deaths are attributable to anthropogenic particulate matter (PM) in the UK, at a cost to the economy of up to £19 billion a year. A coherent and ambitious central government approach to air quality to address these issues is long overdue.

We now look forward to the Government urgently defining and presenting a clear vision for how and when compliance will be achieved. The onus is on the Government to make clear its strategy for achieving compliance with the Directive. We take this opportunity to remind you of the wealth of expertise and experience in the UK, represented by environmental professional organisations and their members. The technology and R&D base of the UK's environmental industries can be exploited, giving this country a sound base from which to develop innovations for further export sales.

In addition attacking this problem holistically could provide a toolbox of measures to successfully decouple economic growth from carbon consumption. Successful delivery of a strategic and integrated vision on this issue is of massive importance to UK plc and the people of the UK who depend on a developed and sustainable economy and the UK's position as a world-leader. It could also help with national carbon emission targets and provide an impetus to the economy.

We hope that the compliance strategy will be:

- holistic;
- sustainable;
- evidence-based;
- science-led; and
- assigned a high priority, in recognition of the pressing nature of the subject.

We urge DEFRA to work with the professions and environmental professional bodies to find effective solutions to air quality issues. We, the undersigned, would be pleased to meet and discuss this with you further.

Yours sincerely,



Professor William Pope CEnv
Vice President
Institution of Environmental Sciences

For and on behalf of:

Roger Barrowcliffe CMET CSci
Chair
Institute of Air Quality Management

Nick Reeves OBE CEnv
Executive Director
Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management

Dr Peter Spillett CEnv
President
Institute of Fisheries Management



**Department
for Environment
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Our ref: PO311074/GM

22 May 2013

From Lord de Mauley
Parliamentary Under Secretary

Dear Professor Pope,

Thank you for your letter of 9 May to the Secretary of State about the Supreme Court judgement of 1 May and the UK's obligation to comply with EU nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) limit values. I am replying as the Minister responsible for policy on air quality.

I can assure you that the Government is committed to meeting the UK's air quality obligations. We have already invested over £1 billion in measures that will help to improve air quality across the UK. For example, we have invested in incentives to improve heavy-duty vehicle standards over many years through Reduced Pollution Certificates and a Green Bus fund of nearly £100 million. There has also been significant investment in incentives for ultra-low emission electric and hybrid vehicles and supporting infrastructure. We have invested record amounts in cycling and sustainable travel to help reduce pollution across the UK.

I agree it is very important that the measures we take to reduce environmental impacts such as air pollution and carbon dioxide also create or support economic growth, and the measures we have taken to promote low-carbon transport are intended to do so. We are exploring options for improving the focus on local action to deliver air quality improvements and to quantify the benefits of these measures. This will help ensure that local air quality management is fit for today's challenges. Air pollution is a significant public health issue and has, therefore, been included in the Department of Health's Public Health Outcomes Framework. This provides a further impetus for a holistic approach to measures to reduce air pollution and exposure and for joint working across transport and health priorities.

Officials would be happy to meet representatives of the Environmental Policy Forum. In the first instance, I would suggest you contact Robert Vaughan, Head of Defra's National and Local Air Quality Team, at: robert.vaughan@defra.gsi.gov.uk to discuss your thoughts further.

Yours sincerely

Robert de Mauley



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IN PEOPLE**