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MR POWELL - No. 10

8 September 1989

INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES.

Dear
Having seen your minute of 28 July to Stephen Wall, I warmly welcome both the Prime Minister's continuing interest in this most important international issue and the proposal that she might make a speech to the UN in November.

2. With respect to the requirements for environmental research, you will be aware of cases made for extra money in the PES advice from the Advisory Board for the Research Councils and in DoE's PES bid. In addition, the recent ACOST advice on National Priorities endorsed current activities on monitoring, data collection and modelling but emphasised the need for more basic science to provide better information in the chemical and biological mechanisms. Indeed, the public awareness and concern about global environmental issues has derived largely from scientific discoveries.

3. I support the cases for ERS2, a climate change centre and the World Ocean Circulation Experiment which should be funded through re-prioritisation of other less important research. However, in addition to these new expenditures, it might be opportune to reconsider our overall financial support for environmental research across Departments.

4. The suggestions on the economic side are sensible but actions need to be dovetailed with scientific research and opportunities. The latter of course range further than environmental research, covering such areas as alternative energy sources, energy efficiency and substitution of products such as chlorofluorocarbons.

5. I am copying this minute to the recipients of yours.

gwb

JOHN W FAIRCLOUGH
Chief Scientific Adviser

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