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From John W Fairclough FEng
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2 October 1989

Dear David,

E(ST)(O) DISCUSSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

A year ago the Prime Minister's speech to the Royal Society signalled Government concern about 'green' issues. In April, the Prime Minister's seminar on Climate Change confirmed the importance of this area of research and indicated that we should build on existing organisations and research strengths. Since then there has been a developing public and political awareness of a broad range of environmental matters and I believe that it is timely for E(ST)(O) to again consider overall activity on environmental issues and Departments' future plans. I would like to do this at the meeting on 9 November.

You will recall that in January the Committee took a look across the board at Departments' interests in environmental issues, and the science and technology aspects of their developing plans and priorities. The aim then was for the Committee:

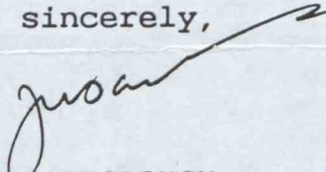
- to satisfy itself that a coherent approach was being developed;
- to determine the need, if any, for greater coordination at national level;
- to agree the UK input to EC and other international programmes.

I believe that we all found that exercise helpful and I would now like E(ST)(O) to review the progress over the last year. In the light of the conclusions of the Prime Minister's seminar I feel that the above three headings are still important and that we should use these as a basis for gathering information.

Accordingly I am inviting you and copy recipients, in particular John Rae, Ron Bell, John Vereker - on behalf of the Research Councils - and Geoffrey Pope to submit papers (no more than four pages if possible) to the meeting, highlighting progress over the last year on environmental matters and outlining plans in hand for future work. I should be particularly interested to learn of progress made in achieving greater coordination at both Departmental and Research Council level.

Other Departments are welcome to submit papers if they wish to do so. All contributions should reach the Secretariat by Wednesday 18 October.

Yours sincerely,



JOHN W FAIRCLOUGH

Circulation: full E(ST)(O)