



*me SLA*

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

**MR. WOOLLEY**  
**CABINET OFFICE**

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**ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

The Prime Minister was grateful for Sir Robin Butler's note of 3 October about Mr. Patten's minute of 27 September. You will have seen the letter I have sent to DOE recording the Prime Minister's reactions to the Secretary of State's proposals and her wish to establish a Ministerial group. I also circulated the list of members which was proposed by Sir Robin. You will also wish to know that she has confirmed that she would like the official interdepartmental group chaired by Richard Wilson to continue to support ministers in identifying issues on Government policy.

*CRS*

**CAROLINE SLOCOCK**  
6 October 1989

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Ref. A089/2512

PRIME MINISTER

In his minute of 27 September the Secretary of State for the Environment proposes that the Government should issue a White Paper on environment policy in about a year's time together with a "State of the Environment" report; and that he should make an early announcement, probably at the Party Conference, of the intention to do so.

2. This proposal stems from your discussion with Mr Patten on 14 September. You will probably wish to agree, perhaps making the point that the White Paper would need to have a strong scientific base, be eminently readable and be accompanied by updated versions of the various environmental booklets which the Government has published.

3. Mr Patten raised with me last week the machinery for carrying out this work. He is concerned that there should be a real drive in all departments to contribute new thinking to environmental policy and wonders whether you would be prepared to chair a Ministerial group to keep progress under review. I promised to put this to you.

4. In case you wish to constitute a formal Ministerial group I --- attach a list of possible members and terms of reference. Other departments with an interest (for instance the Department of Employment) could be invited to attend as necessary. You would also need to consider whether the Lord President and the

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Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster should be members.

5. Whether you wish to convene a Ministerial group or proceed by ad-hoc meetings, you might wish to invite Mr Patten to circulate a paper setting out in more detail the areas where he thinks policy might be developed. This could form the basis for a Second Reading discussion before work is put in hand.

6. Mr Patten also told me that he would welcome it if the Cabinet Office were to continue to co-ordinate a group of officials to support Ministers in identifying the issues on environment policy. If you agree I will ask Mr Wilson to continue with his group.

R.B.

ROBIN BUTLER

3 October 1989