



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

Nobel House  
17 Smith Square  
London SW1P 3JR

T 03459 335577  
helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk  
[www.gov.uk/defra](http://www.gov.uk/defra)

Lord Krebs Kt FRS  
Adaptation Sub Committee  
Committee on Climate Change  
7 Holbein Place  
London  
SW1W 8NR

13 August 2014

**From Dan Rogerson**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Water, Forestry, Rural Affairs and Resource Management

Dear John,

Thank you for briefing me recently on the findings of the Adaptation Sub Committee's 2014 report 'Managing climate risks to well-being and the economy' and for inviting me to address the publication event on the 9th July. It is just over a year since the publication of the first National Adaptation Programme (NAP) report and, as I outlined in my speech, over the past year we have seen that the need for climate change adaptation is as important as ever.

As with previous annual reports prepared by the Committee we will consider the 2014 report findings carefully both within Defra and across Government. We will also take account in our ongoing implementation of the first NAP report and, of course, the work just starting on the second Climate Change Risk Assessment. As the report highlights, the cyclical process of assessment, planning and reporting set out in the Climate Change Act provides for an iterative approach to managing climate risk and the next cycle of adaptation planning allows us to build and learn from the previous one.

I would, however, like to register the full picture on our flood defences, which performed admirably throughout the pounding they took this winter. The Environment Agency's corporate target is to maintain 97% of its flood risk management assets in high consequence systems at or above required condition. At the end of 2013/14 following the winter floods, 94% of its flood risk management assets were at target condition, which is 3% below the corporate target. £270m additional funding has been made available to repair defences before the coming winter and meet the Environment Agency's corporate maintenance target with this work already being well underway.



It is also not the case that hundreds of flood defence schemes are on hold. In 2013/14 the Environment Agency approved all schemes that qualified for funding. This meant that the capital budget for 14/15 was heavily committed. Nevertheless, 41 new schemes are starting construction this year. We are also in the process of agreeing a 6-year programme of work to deliver the record capital investment which was announced last summer. This 6-year programme of work will be announced at the Autumn Statement. The exact details are still being considered and Regional Flood and Coastal Committees will be able to prioritise locally.

This point aside, I would like to thank the Adaptation Sub-Committee for their continued advice to Government and Parliament on the UK's preparedness for climate change - making the UK one of the first in the world to establish a statutory independent assessment of adaptation progress.

I note your current consultation on the adaptation indicator set which will in turn help inform the Committee's statutory assessment of the NAP next year. I understand my officials have worked with yours to agree an efficient process through which to provide updates later this year on NAP actions led by respective Departments across Government and their respective public bodies. We will also be submitting evidence as part of the recently announced Inquiry by the Environmental Audit Committee.



**DAN ROGERSON MP**

