

# John McDonnell responds to the independent Kerslake Review into the Treasury

**John**

**McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow Chancellor**, welcoming the publication of Labour's independent Kerslake Review into the Treasury this morning, said:

"I welcome this report, which has been produced by some of the leading experts in our country who have worked closely with the Treasury. And Labour will be responding in full in the coming weeks to the review.

"Labour asked Sir Bob Kerslake to head up a review into the Treasury because we needed to have a serious and thorough examination of one of the most important pillars of government, and the cornerstone of economic policy making in our country.

"The Treasury is our most important economic policymaking institution, but one that has been criticised by some for its approach and attitudes.

"This review will help shape Labour's economic policy, as well as being an first important step in setting a new direction for the Treasury in the 21st Century. As the views of the former head of the Civil Service are ones that should be taken on board right across the economic and political spectrum in our country.

"As Sir Bob has made clear, we need the Treasury in the 21st century to be not only able to meet the big challenges of the day such as Brexit, but also one that focuses on all corners of our country, so that no one and no community is left behind. Therefore, I am deeply concerned that the review has raised this as areas which need reform.

"Given the severe challenges that our economy and our country face in the coming years, it is vital that we have a Treasury that is up-to-speed and is able to match them. The next Labour government will need to deal with many of these

challenges, with what by then could potentially have been 10 years of Tory economic failure, and it will fall to us to ensure that the Treasury is ready and properly equipped for the 21st century.

“I am are deeply grateful for the contribution from all the independent members of the review’s panel, who represented many different fields of expertise, and who gave up a considerable amount of their time to take part. And I would also like thank Sir Bob Kerslake for his time, energy and expertise in producing this report for Labour.”

**Lord**

**Kerslake, former head of the Civil Service**, who headed up the review, said:

“The Treasury is a small but very powerful department. To make the most of its very capable staff, it needs to fundamentally change both what it does and how it does it. It should focus on its core economic and financial roles and work in a much more open and collaborative way. The impact of Brexit reinforces this need for change”.

Ends

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## **Heathrow expansion – Draft Airports National Policy Statement**

The Government is currently seeking views on the draft the Airports National Policy Statement. Details of the consultation can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/heathrow-expansion-draft-airports-national-policy-statement>.

There are a number of consultation events taking place, such as one in Bracknell on Thursday 16 February 2017 at Carnation Hall. Further details are available on the consultation page.

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## Commenting on the Education Select Committee's report into the evidence for grammar schools – Angela Rayner

**Angela Rayner, Shadow Education Secretary**, commenting on the Education Select Committee's report into the evidence for grammar schools, said:

"When even the Conservative-dominated Education Selection Committee calls Theresa May's new grammar schools an 'unnecessary distraction', it's time that ministers finally sat up and took notice.

"There is a crisis in teacher recruitment, schools budgets are being cut for the first time in decades and hundreds of thousands of pupils are in super-sized classes. The Tories should be keeping their pledge to protect school funding rather than pressing ahead with this policy which will only make things worse for the majority of children."

Ends

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## Natural disasters kill 16 in China in January

Natural disasters have caused the deaths of 16 people in January in China, according to the Ministry of Civil Affairs and the National Commission for Disaster Reduction.

Over 5,200 people were displaced by natural disasters last month, the two authorities said in a statement Monday.

In addition, over 35,000 houses were damaged and about 400 hectares of crops were destroyed, according to the statistics.

The statement said natural disasters in January have caused 541 million yuan (78.5 million U.S. dollars) in direct economic losses.

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# Report: Environment faces 'cocktails of threats' from Brexit



# Green Party

13 February 2017

**UK Environment faces a 'cocktail of threats' from Brexit, says report by MP**

- **Key environmental rules could become 'unenforceable'**
- **Desperation for trade deal with the US risks 'chlorine chickens' and 'hormone beef' coming to UK market**
- **Lucas: we urgently need a 'green guarantee' from the Government to ensure our environment is protected**
- **Over 1100 EU environmental laws need to be transposed in UK law**

A new [report](#) [1] by the Green Party MP, Caroline Lucas, has highlighted what she calls a 'cocktail of risks' to the UK's environment from Brexit.

The report, which has been released just days after the House of Commons voted to trigger Article 50, notes that the EU has been an effective driver of environmental action, and that Britain is now entering a period of 'profound uncertainty' which could lead to the downgrading of many key protections.

As well as detailing the impacts of Brexit on the environment the report calls for a 'Green Guarantee' to ensure that current levels of environmental protection and funding are maintained and strengthened. It also called for a new 'Environment Act' to be put in place ahead of Britain's exit from the EU and for Britain to retain membership of key European agencies.

As part of her report Caroline Lucas revealed House of Commons Library research which finds that over 1100 EU environmental laws will need to be transposed into UK law and that 'the Government has yet to identify all of the EU environment legislation'.

The report spells out ten distinct ways in which Brexit threatens environmental policy in the UK including:

- A lack of oversight of compliance with environmental rules. At present the European Commission and ECJ monitor and act upon breaches of legislation – there is no similar system in place in the UK and laws could become unenforceable.

- Britain exiting key agencies like the European Environment Agency and the Chemicals Agency – which support implementation and development of environmental policies.
- Regulatory equivalencing in new trade deals leading to reduction in environmental protection.
- Potentially exiting from key schemes such as the Emissions Trading Scheme – where the UK has been a key player.
- Reduction in funding for the environment as EU spending on the UK stops. Examples include ending CAP Pillar II payments and the LIFE+ fund. Currently the EU is the major funder for agri-environmental schemes.

Caroline Lucas, a member of the Environmental Audit Committee and a former member of the International of the European Parliament's Trade Committee, said:

"Though we've hardly heard it mentioned by the Government it's clear that British environmental policy faces a cocktail of threats from Brexit. Just days after the Brexit vote in the Commons we can clearly see the huge risks of downgrading environmental protections as part of the post-referendum process. Key laws could become unenforceable, spending on crucial schemes could be cut and new trade deals could undermine existing regulations.

"Outside the EU, there will be much greater probability of legislative change in the UK, more exposure to the political cycle and a danger that investors will be wary of potentially higher risks. The relative attractiveness of the UK as a place for green investment is in danger of being further reduced.

"Theresa May's courting of the United States in pursuit of a new Free Trade Agreement, poses an even greater risk that Ministers may be tempted to water down regulations – such as those on GMOs, pesticides, and animal hormones. We could see chlorinated chickens and hormone beef on UK markets.

"As well as outlining many of the dangers we currently face, this report seeks to present solutions. We need a Green Guarantee that will deliver on Government's commitment to ensuring that "we become the first generation to leave the environment in a better state than we found it. We also need to immediately begin work on introducing an Environment act to ensure that Britain crucial rules and enforcement don't drop off as Britain exits the EU."

Notes:

[1] A copy of the report is here: <https://www.carolinelucas.com/sites/carolinelucas.com/files/Safe%20Guarding%20Environment%20after%20Brexit.pdf>

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