

'It is time to put the interests of Ethiopian people first'

I would like begin by thanking Under-Secretary DiCarlo and Acting Under-Secretary Ramesh Rajasingham for their expert insights and briefings today.

Today is an important opportunity. It is right that this Security Council considers how to help end this devastating conflict and support all of the people of Ethiopia.

I shall not repeat the picture of suffering outlined by our briefers. It is stark. It is real. But after eight months of conflict, we remain deeply concerned by all that we have heard and that we are seeing.

Instead, I want to make three brief points: on the immediate humanitarian situation, the need for conflict resolution and in addressing human rights concerns, so that Ethiopia can move on from this most tragic of conflicts.

But before I go any further, I want to pay tribute up front to the twelve humanitarian workers – and I'm sure I speak for every member of this Council – who have been killed since this conflict began. Protection of humanitarian workers, of their offices, of their equipment, is a central tenet of international humanitarian law.

Their work is especially vital in Tigray where, as OCHA have outlined today, and as the IPC data shows, at least 353,000 people are now in famine conditions.

People have died from hunger. People are dying from hunger. People will continue to die unless they get the help they need and get the help they need now. This is a man-made famine and we need to act.

In this regard, the United Kingdom welcomes the unilateral ceasefire declared by the Government of Ethiopia.

All sides – the Federal Government of Ethiopia, Tigray Defence Forces, Amhara militias and Eritrean Defence Forces – have an opportunity to end the cycle of violence and suffering.

We urge them to take it. And we call on Eritrean forces to withdraw, as requested by the Ethiopian government.

Our immediate priority has to be for humanitarian assistance to get through to those that require it. The restoration of basic infrastructure, including electricity, communications and banking services and ensuring food and other needed goods can reach Tigray. It is essential to prevent further loss of life.

Enabling humanitarian agencies to get visas for their staff and import communications equipment so they can operate effectively is imperative.

Indeed we've heard that today. Denial of humanitarian access is a direct violation of international humanitarian law.

At the same time, we, the international community, and UN agencies must be ready to respond.

The response to date has frankly been insufficient. The ceasefire gives us the opportunity to address this and urgently increase the amount of aid reaching the starving people of Tigray. And in this regard the United Kingdom has already allocated £47.7 million.

A full and sustained ceasefire will give all parties time and space to address the root causes of this conflict through both dialogue and reconciliation and for an inclusive political process to be initiated.

The United Kingdom welcomes and endorses African Union Commission Chairperson Faki's call for all parties to uphold their responsibilities under international law to protect civilians.

He is of course right that a comprehensive and all-encompassing permanent ceasefire is absolutely necessary to pave the way for sustainable peace in Tigray.

We will support the African Union in its efforts in pursuit of peace and stability in Tigray, Ethiopia, and, indeed, the wider region. And we encourage the United Nations system to consider how it can also assist as the situation develops, as part of a very much joined-up process and coherent strategy.

Finally, Mr President, Special Representative Patten and High Commissioner Bachelet have highlighted serious allegations of human rights abuses and violations. They also described systematic sexual violence which, as the United Kingdom Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict, I have been particularly moved by.

The United Kingdom is supporting the ICRC and UN agencies to provide essential services to survivors of sexual violence and an extra £16.7 million of funds we announced in June will support and drive towards accountability.

And this week, Mr President, we have additionally deployed an expert to advise on support for the safe collection – and this is vital, this is imperative – for the safe collection and preservation of evidence, in order to bring the perpetrators of sexual violence to justice at the appropriate time.

The United Kingdom welcomes the proposed inquiry of the African Commission for Human and People's Rights and it fully supports the ongoing Joint Investigation between the UN Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission. We will also co-sponsor a resolution on Tigray at the Human Rights Council in Geneva this month.

Mr President, transparency and accountability will be vital if Ethiopia is truly to move past this tragic conflict. We collectively owe this to the

victims. We owe it to the survivors.

Our message is clear: it is time for all sides to put down their weapons; it is time to allow unrestricted access for humanitarian aid; and it is time to put now the interests of Ethiopian people first.

I hope this Council can now work constructively, with the African Union and partners, to ensure progress on these most critical of issues and turn around the situation for the sake of the people of Tigray and the sake of all Ethiopians.

Thank you, Mr President.

[COP26 President speaks at closing event of London Climate Action Week](#)

Good afternoon, it's a real pleasure to join you today and I want to thank everyone who's been involved with making London Climate Action Week happen.

I think it's a great event and it's brought together frankly the top thinkers and organisations on climate around the world.

I've seen some great announcements. I'm sitting here in the City of London at the moment and we've seen at the climate week the launch of the Net Zero Lawyers Alliance, and this of course includes the likes of DLA Piper and Clifford Chance.

And of course the Powering Past Coal Alliance, has also announced twelve new members, including Spain, and they are all dedicated to ending coal power. That is a particular issue that I raise when I go around the world and it's a particular priority for me.

So, I'm particularly pleased to be speaking at this event, really to underline the importance of how we can work together to keep 1.5C alive.

As friends and colleagues on this meeting will know that is what we would like to come out of COP26. The overarching message is that collectively we have done enough to keep 1.5C alive.

The challenge of that is enormous. The commitment was of course made in Paris to limit temperature rise to below 2C, and closer to 1.5C, but of course it is an enormous challenge.

And we also know, as we've heard throughout this week, that the science is just going to keep getting starker.

We're going to have to halve global emissions by 2030 if we're going to keep

1.5 within reach.

And to achieve this goal, the UK COP26 Presidency is pushing for action in four key areas.

First, we want the world on a path to driving down emissions, until they reach net zero by the middle of this century.

And therefore, as I go around the world, as I speak to countries virtually, I am urging all countries to make net zero commitments and of course those short term emissions reduction targets, those Nationally Determined Contributions as well, to take them there.

And we are pushing for action in key areas like clean energy, clean transport, halting deforestation, and of course that very much includes by supporting the clean energy transition in developing countries, through our COP26 Energy Transition Council.

As I have said when I've been going round a range of developing countries, particularly those who are going to have significantly increased energy needs, the message I always give is please let's work together to get a clean energy transition working for you.

And as I've said many, many times if we're going to keep 1.5C alive then this must be the COP that actually consigns coal power to history and as I said this is one of my personal priorities.

We also want this to be the COP that calls time on polluting vehicles and we're working with governments around the world as part of our zero emissions vehicle transition council to ensure that happens. And we also want this to be the COP that tackles deforestation by making sustainable production pay, and again we're working closely with partners around the world on the FACT dialogues.

Overall, I think we have seen some progress. When we took on the COP26 Presidency in the backend of 2019, less than 30%, I think around 26% of the world economy, countries representing the world economy were covered by a net zero target. We now have 70% of the global economy covered by a net zero target. I obviously listened to the previous speaker about the G7 and it is worth pointing out that the entire G7 now has a net zero target and of course also 2030 emissions reduction targets to take them there.

70 percent of the global economy is now covered by net zero commitments.

Colleagues will know that at the G7 countries committed to end international coal financing and to transition away from dirty coal domestically. This was obviously set out in the leaders' communique but again this was something that colleagues worked on, I co-chaired the climate and environment ministers meeting and these were commitments that came out of those constructive discussions.

And from a UK perspective as well of course we have now confirmed that we are going to be phasing out coal power in our electricity mix by 2024. We've

already gone from around 40% of electricity being generated by coal in 2012 to less than 2% now, but it is going to go to zero by 2024.

But of course I completely acknowledge there is much, much further to go, and we have a few short months left to COP. And attention now turns to the G20 after the G7 and of course its meetings in July.

And I'm urging the G20 group to step up and make strong commitments, the commitments that actually the world needs.

We are working closely with our friends in Italy, obviously our COP26 Partners and also holding the Presidency of the G20, to make progress with G20 nations.

Our second goal is to protect people and nature from the effects of our changing climate.

And again this is a particular priority for me.

Colleagues will know that I was born in India.

I have served for a period of time as International Development Secretary in the UK Government.

And I have been deeply moved by talking to communities, visiting communities around the world who are suffering the effects of climate change. They are on the frontline and quite frankly these are not communities that have contributed largely to the problems that we all face collectively.

And I am determined COP26 will deliver for the most climate vulnerable.

And of course we want to raise the political status of adaptation, to encourage and support countries to take action, and to increase the finance available for adaptation. I know that this has been a particular issue, I have made it very clear that we cannot have adaptation seen as the poor cousin of mitigation, we have to fix this.

We are also taking action on loss and damage.

We launched the Adaptation Action Coalition coming out of the call to action that we had in 2019 at the UN General Assembly. This is an opportunity for countries to share and indeed scale solutions.

We are asking every country to arrive in Glasgow having set out their adaptation priorities.

And we are determined, we are absolutely determined, to get the Santiago Network up and running, so we can connect climate vulnerable countries to the assistance that they need.

Our third goal is to get finance flowing to climate action, and of course I'm talking about not just the public finance but also the private finance.

This is absolutely vital, frankly without finance the task ahead for all of us is going to be near impossible.

I say again that developed countries must deliver that \$100billion a year they have promised to support developing countries to respond to the climate crisis.

And I have to tell you that the frustration that I hear from leaders and ministers in developing countries that these funds still remain uncertain is absolutely palpable.

And frankly it is entirely understandable as well.

I've always been clear that the \$100billion is very much a matter of trust, it's a totemic figure, and delivering this is a priority for our COP Presidency of course for the work we are doing through the G7.

Now, you will know coming out of the leaders' communique and indeed coming out of the work we did with the climate and environment ministers, every G7 country has committed to increase finance to meet the \$100 billion target, including boosting funds to protect people and nature from the effects of climate change.

You'll have seen that Germany and Canada and Japan have all put new money on the table following the G7 summit, which together amounts to billions of dollars a year.

But I completely acknowledge we have further to go.

Ahead of COP26, we are going to need all developed countries to make ambitious finance commitments for the next five years. It's something I've pressed with ministers literally on a daily basis. We also need to increase the sums that go to adaptation.

And we need to provide developing countries with confidence and clarity, by publishing a clear plan for how, together, we are going to deliver the \$100billion a year between now and 2025.

And there are opportunities of course for donors to step up at the meetings of the G20 ministers in Italy in July, as well as at the UN General Assembly in September.

Again, I think this issue has come up and I acknowledge that we also deal with issues such as access to finance and debt. Absolutely vital.

You'll know that in March I brought together Ministers from 50 governments and multilateral institutions to address these issues.

And we are focussed on delivering on the commitments that were made at that meeting, including the work we're doing with Fiji and others.

Our fourth and final goal is of course working together collaboratively and encouraging that cooperation across borders and across society to keep the

1.5 degree target in reach.

And this means building consensus amongst governments, so the negotiations in Glasgow are a success.

We will need to agree, together, how we are going to meet the scale of the climate challenge.

And we're going to need to resolve those outstanding parts of the Paris Rulebook.

Now, in these last few months ahead of COP, this is going to be a particular focus for me.

And you will know that we are bringing together a representative group of Ministers from governments around the world at the end of July in London to find a way forward on some of the most complex issues that have been outstanding for six years. And we need to do that, we need to get that homework done, before we meet in Glasgow in November.

In terms of the COP event itself, I have always said that I am committed to an in-person COP and these are calls that I've heard from countries around the world. Literally in every country I go to there is a very clear desire for this to be a physical meeting. And earlier this week, working with the UN, we launched our offer to vaccinate all COP26 accredited delegates, who would not otherwise be able to get hold of vaccines.

The registration portal is now open, and this is where registered national delegates and observers, and media delegates, can register for a vaccine.

And in the coming weeks, we will set out further details of the health and safety measures we will be implementing at COP itself. We are absolutely committed to making this a physical event.

And working together also means of course bringing businesses and civil society on board, behind our COP26 goals.

Because we all have a role to play.

Action from business is going to be absolutely vital in driving change across the real economy.

And civil society can raise awareness, it can build support for strong policy, and hold leaders to account.

All of which helps to create the conditions for ambitious climate action from governments.

Civil society can also help to represent communities, something that the UK COP26 presidency and I certainly value very very highly.

And we are committed to an inclusive COP26 where all voices are heard, including the voices of developing countries, of women, of young people and

indigenous peoples.

And we are dedicated to bringing civil society into the heart of COP26.

I have committed to, and I'm sticking with this, meeting youth and civil society climate activists in countries that I visit.

And of course the UK's COP26 Presidency has established the Civil Society and Youth Advisory Council to help shape the Summit. We are very very pleased to have Amanda Mukwashi as a member.

So friends, I believe all of us here today have the same burning ambition, the same desire and that same relentless commitment to keep 1.5 degrees alive.

Now this is possible, but with COP just months away all of us must redouble our efforts.

So what I would like to do is to request you, to ask you to use your influence to keep up pressure on governments in these vital final months on the emitters, on the donors, we must keep pushing for action that I have outlined.

And to show that the appetite that exists for strong climate action is around the world.

Together, let's make COP26 the moment that we put the world on a path to keep that vital 1.5 degree limit alive.

And let's protect our precious planet for future generations.

Thank you so much Nick for having me today.

ENDS.

UK exceeds 600,000 COVID-19 tests genomically sequenced

- More than 600,000 positive COVID-19 samples have now been genomically sequenced
- Sequencing provides invaluable data that will support decisions to relax social distancing in the future and help monitor for future variants and infectious disease threats
- Nationwide GenOMICC COVID-19 study has already identified genes that make people susceptible to severe COVID-19 symptoms, but volunteers are still required in a race against the clock.

The UK has today (Friday 2 July) surpassed another important milestone in the fight against COVID-19, with over 600,000 genomically sequenced positive COVID-19 tests.

The strength of the UK's genomics science base and diagnostics sequencing industry has allowed the UK to rapidly identify COVID-19 variants and capture critical data, enabling our scientists to track and stay ahead of mutations in the genome of the virus. It is estimated that the UK contributes around 23% of all COVID-19 sequencing across the world uploaded to [GISAID](#).

Genomic sequencing is laboratory analysis that identifies a virus's genetic make-up, allowing new variants or mutations in existing variants to be detected. Reaching this milestone is testament to the extraordinary expertise the UK has in genomics and the efforts of researchers, laboratory scientists and analysts, clinicians and policymakers.

Thanks to the UK's world-leading genomic sequencing capability, cases of the Delta (B.1.617.2) variant have been quickly detected, as well as other variants of concern. This has allowed the government to rapidly deploy additional support to areas where variants of concern have been prevalent, such as surge testing and enhanced contact tracing, to help slow the spread of variants by breaking chains of transmission.

Now, everyone has the opportunity to contribute to the UK's genomic success. Since May 2020, a nationwide study led by the University of Edinburgh as part of the GenOMICC consortium and in partnership with Genomics England has been trying to find out why some people who have had COVID-19 became extremely ill and needed hospitalisation while others experienced fewer or no symptoms. To date, over 8,400 people who tested positive with COVID-19 but did not need to go to hospital have volunteered to take part.

The [preliminary results](#) of the study have already identified possible new treatments to fight the virus, which are in clinical trials. However, with the study due to close on 30 September 2021 scientists urgently need to recruit 600 more people and are appealing to those who have had the virus but did not require hospital treatment to sign up. Researchers are particularly keen to hear from men and those from minority ethnic groups as these are the people who were more severely affected and ended up in hospital.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

The UK has an established history of scientists developing incredible genomic technology striving to improve patient outcomes around the world. Every single test sequenced helps us to learn more about this awful virus, and brings us one step closer to defeating it.

Surge testing has been rolled out to specific areas across the country to monitor and suppress the spread of COVID-19 and to better understand new variants. Genomic sequencing is a key part of surge testing as it enables scientists to continue to identify variants of concern, as well as any

changes to known variants or to identify new emerging variants that need to be followed. All positive tests with high enough viral load in surge testing postcodes and from identified test sites will be sent for sequencing.

In addition to surge testing, the government is providing additional support packages to stop the spread of the Delta variant which includes support for those self-isolating and activity to maximise vaccine uptake in the area. In areas where data has demonstrated that extra support has helped to slow the initial spread of the Delta variant, such as Kirklees, this support is being scaled back now that the rate of case number growth are in line with national and regional rates.

To increase our preparedness and heighten our defences against new variants, we have [backed new technology for detecting known variants](#), known as 'genotype assay testing', which detects mutations that indicate known variants of concern in as little as 48 hours after a positive COVID-19 PCR test result. Genotype assay testing needs to be used after PCR, and in order to detect the maximum number of cases with variants, the government uses confirmatory PCR testing for positive LFD test results in England during lower prevalence periods. Confirmatory tests are used to validate the result of the initial LFD rapid test.

The virus will continue to naturally evolve as it spreads globally, but the UK will continue to use its excellent genomics, epidemiology and virology capacity to monitor all variants to ensure that public health interventions are effective and proportionate.

Chief Scientist at Genomics England Professor Sir Mark Caulfield said:

We're in a race against the clock to find another 600 suitable people to volunteer matched for age, gender and ethnicity of those people who were severely affected and needed hospital treatment. We particularly need more men to join the study and members of the Asian and black communities as those people who were most severely affected by COVID-19.

If you tested positive for COVID-19 but did not need to go to hospital, please sign up. You'll be making a real contribution to improving the medical care and outcome for those most at risk from the virus – both now and in the future.

UKHSA chief executive Jenny Harries said:

As we continue to follow the government's roadmap to a way of life that feels more familiar, sequencing genomes will become even more important than it is already. It allows us to track how the virus is mutating, helping us to respond more effectively and decisively to the threat of emerging variants and providing insight that is helping to shape the response to this pandemic across the globe.

Continuing to share our world-class genomics and virology expertise with the world will be a key priority for the UK Health Security Agency.

I am enormously grateful to those who have worked so hard to get us to this point. With every genome sequenced, we learn more about the virus and equip scientists and experts in the UK and across the world with much needed data and insight.

Process of genome sequencing

Genomic sequencing has been vital in detecting and responding to emerging COVID-19 strains and variants of concern. Public Health England (PHE) has closely monitored how COVID-19 has changed over time with new variants, increasing understanding of how these changes affect the characteristics of the virus and using this insight to evaluate the increased transmissibility of new strains.

In the early stages of the pandemic the COVID-19 Genomics UK (COG-UK) Consortium was created to deliver large-scale and rapid whole-genome virus sequencing to local NHS centres and the government. Data collected by the consortium has helped public health agencies to better manage the outbreak in the UK and inform vaccine development efforts. Sequencing is now being delivered through a programme within UKHSA building upon the work of COG-UK.

After sequencing, virus genome data are combined with clinical and epidemiological datasets in order to help to guide UK public health interventions and policies. In the future, this information will enable the evaluation of novel treatments and non-pharmacological interventions and provide information on community transmission and outbreaks. This data will also allow researchers to identify and evaluate emerging genetic changes in known variants and scrutinise how they affect the ability of the virus to transmit from person to person.

A critical part of our genomic surveillance is to support global safety through testing people travelling overseas. Scientists in PHE upload variant sequence information to GISAID alerting other countries to the presence of variants in different global regions.

The [UK's New Variant Assessment Programme](#) is already supporting countries who make use of the UK's genomic sequencing technology to spot new variants, providing them with technical support as well as upskilling their scientists with training.

Background information

See the up-to-date [list of areas where surge testing is currently being deployed](#).

Register to [volunteer to take part in the GenOMICC study](#). Anyone wishing to volunteer to take part in this study must pre-register and book an

appointment online. After registering via the website, volunteers can make an appointment for a home visit from a nurse.

UK leadership in genomics

UK research has led to paradigm-shifting discoveries in genetics – from the original discovery of the structure of DNA to our involvement in the Human Genome Project.

The UK has also led the way in translating seminal research into clinical practice and improved patient outcomes. It is also the home of extensive genomics and health research infrastructure, from the UK Biobank, established in 2006 to Genomics England, the NHS England and Improvement Genomic Medicine Service (GMS).

Genomics is just one example of this government's commitment to driving forwards healthcare innovation in the UK, which will play a central role in its future health resilience, the growth of its life sciences sector and measures to improve patient care.

PM meeting with German Chancellor Angela Merkel: 2 July 2021

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson met with German Chancellor Angela Merkel at Chequers today.



The Prime Minister welcomed German Chancellor Angela Merkel to Chequers today.

He began by praising Chancellor Merkel for her 16 years of service as Chancellor of Germany. The Prime Minister said the world was more prosperous and secure, and the UK-Germany relationship stronger as a result of her

leadership.

The leaders agreed on a number of steps to further enhance our bilateral relationship, including holding annual joint Cabinet meetings, reinforcing cultural links and expanding youth exchanges.

The Prime Minister and Chancellor discussed the fight against the coronavirus pandemic and the need for a global recovery that will enable us to reopen international travel and return as close as possible to normal life.

The Prime Minister outlined the success of the UK's domestic vaccine programme and the leaders agreed on the need to vaccinate the world over the next year. They welcomed progress at the recent G7 Summit in Cornwall to this end.

They discussed the need for countries to take ambitious steps towards cutting carbon emissions ahead of the UK-hosted COP26 Summit and for richer countries to help developing nations boost economic growth in a clean way.

The Prime Minister and Chancellor also covered a number of foreign policy issues, including Russia's malign behaviour and NATO's withdrawal from Afghanistan. They welcomed the Joint Declaration on Foreign Policy signed by the UK and German Foreign Ministers this week, and agreed it would provide a springboard for more bilateral cooperation between the UK and Germany on these issues.

The Prime Minister reiterated the need for a permanent arrangement on the Northern Ireland Protocol that protects the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement and safeguards Northern Ireland's place in the United Kingdom.

Published 2 July 2021

[Comments on the Taskforce on Innovation, Growth and Regulatory Reform \(TIGRR\) report](#)

The Government is planning to reform its approach to regulation to ensure that the UK takes advantage of the opportunities offered by our exit from the EU and to ensure that we regulate in a way that is as effective as possible, promoting innovation and growth. The RPC strongly supports these objectives. We see our role as helping the Government deliver better regulation through ensuring that policy properly considers the costs, benefits and risks of different regulatory and non-regulatory options.

Regulation and the regulatory policy-making process can have a significant impact on individuals and businesses, and it is important to think strategically about how we assess different policy alternatives. The Taskforce on Innovation, Growth and Regulatory Reform (TIGRR) [report](#), published last week makes a significant contribution to that debate. This note provides comments from the RPC on aspects of that report that relate to regulatory processes and the Better Regulation Framework.

In the UK we are considering reform from a position of strength – our current systems are highly regarded internationally – but there is undoubtedly potential for us to improve further in pursuit of regulating in a way that achieves the Government’s objectives while minimising the burdens on UK businesses and civil society. We also recognise that Government is concerned about more than just the impacts of its policies on business – for example it needs to consider the impact on the environment, our health and safety, and economic growth.

The case for enhanced Parliamentary scrutiny

The TIGRR report makes a case for enhanced Parliamentary scrutiny. We see Parliament as a key ‘customer’ for our opinions and would welcome a greater focus on the impact of proposed regulations in Parliament. We would be very pleased to discuss how we might complement any enhanced parliamentary scrutiny role and how we could work with select committees and others to deliver this.

Reducing the impacts of regulation on business – One-in, Two-out

Both the TIGRR report and John Penrose’s recent report [‘Power to the People’](#) make similar recommendations to introduce a ‘one-in, two-out’ regulatory duty on all government departments (that is for each regulation that a department wants to introduce that imposes net costs on business, it would have to introduce a deregulatory measure to reduce net costs on business by twice as much). Such an approach would encourage departments to pay close attention to, and seek to minimise, the costs of regulation on business and assess the continuing need for existing regulations.

The detail of such a system needs careful consideration. In our view, a decision on whether such a requirement would help should follow a decision on which metric is used to compare impacts. A metric that is narrowly focussed (for example only considering the direct impacts on business or netting out gains and losses within a market segment), may conflict with other Government objectives such as Net Zero, Levelling-Up and new free trade agreements. We would particularly wish to avoid a situation where significant policy areas were carved-out of the scope of the framework because they involve additional costs to business. Therefore, any new mechanism would need to be flexible enough to allow for multiple objectives.

Identifying a lead Cabinet Minister responsible for regulatory reform

While it is clearly for the Prime Minister to decide how this should be managed within his Government, we support the proposal that these issues are

given appropriate priority and strategic oversight at Cabinet-level.

Proportionality – recognising the impact of regulations on small businesses

We support the proposal that departments and regulators should assess whether proposed regulations are likely to have disproportionate impacts on small businesses.

As part of our independent scrutiny, we are already able to rate IAs as ‘not fit for purpose’ if there is insufficient analysis of the impacts on small and micro businesses, or a lack of consideration of whether these businesses should be exempt or benefit from mitigation of the measure. As a direct result of our scrutiny, departments have adjusted some regulatory proposals to exempt small and micro businesses (for example provision of personal information on consumer bills in machine readable format).

Consideration of wider impacts in impact assessments

The TIGRR report recommends that scrutiny of IAs should include consideration of the wider effects of proposed policies on innovation, competition, the environment and trade. The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) report on [‘Regulation and Competition’](#) also recommends that we should be able to red-rate IAs as ‘not fit for purpose’ based on their assessment of the impact on competition and innovation, while the [Natural Capital Committee](#) believes that we should be able to red-rate on the assessment of natural environment impacts.

Our opinions already comment on the quality of evidence and analysis on a range of issues including the impact on competition, the environment/net zero, trade, distributional impacts, consumers and innovation. We have recently started providing an informal assessment of the quality of IAs’ analysis of these factors in our opinions (assessing them as: good, satisfactory, weak or very weak). However the Better Regulation Framework does not currently allow us to take account of these wider issues in our formal rating of IAs as green (fit for purpose) or red (not fit for purpose). Given the importance of these wider impacts to government policy, we would welcome a discussion of how the framework could be strengthened and extended.

Why is this important now?

We are pleased that the TIGRR report recognises the value of independent scrutiny of regulatory proposals and recognises the role the RPC currently plays, however our effectiveness is limited by the framework within which we operate. The Government is about to launch a review of the Better Regulation Framework. This provides an opportunity to make changes to the way the independent scrutiny process works and to ensure that it is as effective as possible in delivering better policy-making and ultimately better policy. We therefore encourage Government to take on board these comments as part of the review and we ask stakeholders to support this approach in their responses to the Government’s consultation.