

Review of the Environment Agency and Natural England

Terms of reference

December 2012

- To undertake a review of the functions and form of the Environment Agency (EA) and Natural England (NE). The EA and NE have significant roles in delivering the Government's ambitions on the environment and flood and coastal risk management and are key bodies within Defra's network of Arms Length Bodies.
- To assess how the relevant parts of Defra's delivery network, or any proposed reforms, can achieve better quality outcomes for the environment, the economy and for society on a sustainable basis. The Review will need to examine:
 - whether the existing delivery arrangements are efficient and affordable;
 - whether the existing delivery arrangements offer opportunities for ongoing improved services for customers and cost savings, and to stimulate and sustain economic growth; and
 - whether alternative delivery models may lead to better quality outcomes and the benefits, costs and risks associated with any potential alternative delivery options.
- To confirm that the governance arrangements applying to the EA and NE are sufficiently robust and transparent so that there is due accountability to Government and the public.
- The Review will be conducted in an open and inclusive way, working closely with EA and NE, other Government Departments, Parliament and the broad range of customers and stakeholders. It will focus primarily on functions delivered in England, taking into account the formation of Natural Resources Wales and recognising that activities in border areas are of interest to people in Scotland and Wales.

Governance of the Review

- The Review is conducted on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs and will be carried out in accordance with Government guidelines for Triennial Reviews¹. The Review team will comprise officials from Defra.
- A Challenge Group ('the Group') has been established to test and challenge rigorously and robustly the scope, Terms of Reference, assumptions, methodology and conclusions of the Review.
- The Review will commence on 12 December 2012 and is expected to publish conclusions in spring 2013.

¹ Cabinet Office Guidance on Reviews of Non Departmental Public Bodies p.4-5 - www.civilservice.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/triennial-reviews-guidance-2011_tcm6-38900.pdf