Ms Danuta Hübner  
Member of the European Commission  
Berlaymont Building  
Rue de la Loi 200  
BE – 1040 - Brussels

Dear Ms Hübner

Subject Growing Regions, growing Europe: Public consultation on the future of EU Cohesion Policy.

The European Regional Policy Group, a grouping of the United Kingdom statutory countryside and environmental agencies\(^1\), welcome this opportunity to contribute to the debate to shape the European Union’s cohesion policy for the period beyond 2013.

We believe that cohesion policy must embrace a number of fundamental policies if it is to succeed in tackling the challenges we face now and those that we will face in the future.

The European Regional Policy Group believe that cohesion policy must:

1. comply with a sustainable development framework with full integration of environmental, social and economic needs;
2. take into account environmental disparities, and give these due weight, if it is to successfully support an effective single market;
3. integrate climate change adaptation actions across all its aspects, to address the increased regional disparities which will arise from climate change;
4. support reductions in carbon dioxide, and greenhouse gas, emissions across Europe in pursuit of environmental gain in Europe and beyond;
5. improve its environmental performance, demonstrating a clear commitment to the delivery of European environmental policy;
6. deliver through the purchase of “public goods”, including those which protect and enhance the environment, rather than seek to compensate for disadvantage.

I enclose with this letter our response to the consultation questions, Annex 1. Our response has been guided by the application of our six principles.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this response please contact Graeme Kerr at Graeme.kerr@Naturalengland.org.uk

Yours sincerely

James Marsden  
Director Policy, Natural England  
On behalf of the European Regional Policy Group

\(^1\) Countryside Council for Wales, Environment Agency, JNCC, Natural England, Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage,