



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## **RURAL AFFAIRS, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

The Rt. Hon. Owen Paterson MP  
Secretary of State for Environment,  
Food and Rural Affairs  
Nobel House  
17 Smith Square  
London SW1P 3JR

c/o Clerk to the Committee  
Room T3.40  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh EH99 1SP  
Tel: (0131) 348 5240  
e-mail: [racce.committee@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:racce.committee@scottish.parliament.uk)

25 June 2013

Dear Secretary of State,

### **Follow-up from appearance before the Scottish Parliament's Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee**

Firstly, thank you for appearing before the Scottish Parliament's Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee on 12 June 2013. Given the great importance to Scotland of the Common Agricultural Policy, and many other issues within your remit, such as neonicotinoids and GM products, we particularly welcomed your commitment to return to the Committee in the future to continue discussions on these matters. I hope you found our lively exchange of views as interesting and worthwhile as we did.

There were a couple of issues we asked you to provide further information to the Committee on in writing, and also some questions, due to time constraints, that we were not able to put to you. We would therefore welcome a response, or further information, on the following—

- a clear indication of how the UK's share of Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 funds will be allocated between the four countries of the UK; what formula will be used to determine this, or what criteria the allocations are based on; what the respective amounts are likely to be; and when the final decision will be taken on these matters;
- whether the UK Government intends to allocate any funds received by the UK as a consequence of convergence in pillar 1 (whereby Member States in receipt of less than 90% of the EU average per hectare would receive an uplift in pillar one payments) directly to Scotland, given that any funds received by the UK are likely to be predominantly as a result of historically lower payments to Scotland;

- any further comment you have on the way young farmers are defined as having to be under 40? Would you agree that having any age limit could be seen as discriminatory? Can you see a way of Scotland deciding which new entrants it chooses to support, irrespective of age?
  
- any further information/views you have on the issue of neonicotinoids, such as—
  - what research is being/has been done on the impact of neonicotinoid use on pollinators in the UK;
  - what alternative pesticides may be required,
  - what research is being undertaken into those alternatives - could these be as damaging to insect pollinators;
  - what you think the impact of the ban will be on UK farmers;
  - do you have any information on the European Commission's opinion of the UK Government's recent field trial and if it contributed anything to the science on the effects of neonicotinoids on bees;
  - do you think that crops affected by the ban will now have a substantial reduction in yield; and
  - do you have any information on the Commission's view of the best way forward in terms of integrated pest management?

The Committee is planning to hold a business planning session in August, and it would be helpful if we had a response from you in advance of that, in order to take account of your comments in our work planning, with a view to liaising with your office to arrange a session with you before the end of this year.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Rob Gibson". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Rob Gibson MSP  
Convener