This is a call for evidence on **nature, food and farming** for IPPR’s **Environmental Justice Commission**.

It is one of several calls for evidence to be issued over the coming months.

The deadline for this call for evidence is **Monday 23rd March 2020**.

If you have questions or queries about this call for evidence, or the Environmental Justice Commission, please e-mail **ejc@ippr.org**.
ABOUT THE IPPR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

The IPPR Environmental Justice Commission (EJC) is a landmark initiative – building on IPPR’s pioneering work on environmental breakdown and its Commission for Economic Justice – to help develop the ideas and policies to bring about a rapid green transition that is fair and just.

IPPR’s EJC will respond to the challenges facing the UK by setting out an ambitious programme of reform, capable of tackling the dual problems of the climate and nature emergency and wider economic and social injustices. It will:

- Set out the bold policy action required for the UK to deliver its contribution to tackle climate change and wider environmental breakdown, cutting emissions to net zero in an economically and socially just way.
- Demonstrate how bold action can provide enormous benefits for communities, through the creation of green jobs, spreading prosperity and ensuring a just transition in the UK.
- Help build the public and political support required to deliver this ambitious programme of reform.
- Provide the UK with a platform to demonstrate real leadership on the issues of climate change and just transition ready for the next Conference of the Parties (COP26) in 2020.

The Commission is looking in practice at how the UK can address mass declines in nature and deliver its contribution to tackling climate change and cutting emissions to net zero in an economically and socially just way. It is considering how to ensure a rapid and just transition for all through a green transformation of the entire economy, creating hundreds of thousands of good quality jobs and giving people real ownership over their future in the process. The Commission is considering the economic and social injustices associated with the issue including the disproportionate impact by, for example, gender, class and ethnicity. It is also examining the UK’s international responsibilities in tackling the accelerating climate and nature crises.

The Commission is engaging with politicians and policymakers of all political parties, experts and academics, civil society, workers and trade unions, businesses and business groups, local government and communities, and climate and environment activists. The Commission is also seeking the views of the public, using a participative model of engagement including the use of ‘citizens juries’.

The Commission’s Final Report will be published in the next year.
Commissioners

1. Ed Miliband, Labour party MP for Doncaster North (Co-Chair of the Commission)
2. Caroline Lucas, Green party MP for Brighton Pavilion (Co-Chair of the Commission)
3. Laura Sandys, Chair, BEIS Energy System Data Taskforce, Conservative MP 2010-15 (Co-Chair of the Commission)
4. Paul Booth OBE, Chair of Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership
5. Beth Farhat, Northern Regional Secretary, Trades Union Congress
6. Angela Francis, Chief Advisor, Economics and Economic Development at WWF-UK
7. Charlotte Hartley, Member of 2050 Climate Group & the Scottish Just Transition Commission
8. Fatima Zaha-Ibrahim, Campaigner and climate activist
9. Prof Michael Jacobs, Head of Engagement and Impact at SPERI
10. Tom Kibasi, former Director of IPPR
11. Catherine McGuinness, Chair, Policy & Resources Committee, City of London Corporation
12. Paul Nowak, Deputy General Secretary, Trade Union Congress
13. Kate Raworth, Senior visiting Research Associate, Environmental Change Institute, University of Oxford
14. Dr Emily Shuckburgh, Director of Research on Carbon Neutrality, the University of Cambridge
15. David Symons, Global Future Ready programme leader, WSP
16. Anna Taylor, Student climate striker and activist
17. Steve Waygood, Chief Responsible Investment Officer, Aviva Investors
18. Farhana Yamin, IPPC environmental lawyer and Extinction Rebellion activist

BACKGROUND TO THIS CALL FOR EVIDENCE

Our natural world is a shadow of its former self. Centuries of habitat loss and depletion, pollution and persecution have degraded our natural world. Recent trends have shown that even with increased awareness of our impacts on the natural world, nature is still deteriorating, with 41 per cent of species declining and 15 per cent of species threatened with extinction. There has been no let-up in the loss of nature in the UK¹.

This state of nature is not unique to the UK. Global studies show alarming trends in the natural world with unprecedented declines in nature and accelerating extinction rates. One million species are estimated to be threatened with extinction world-wide².

A healthy natural world is critical to a healthy society, supporting abundant biodiversity and providing us with a range of ecosystem services on which we depend, including crop pollination, healthy soils, flood defence and health and wellbeing benefits. It is also critical to helping us achieve our net zero goals, and to mitigate and adapt to the effects of a warming climate.

Agriculture has been identified as one of the largest drivers of the loss of nature on land both globally and within the UK, but a sustainable agricultural and land management industry is vital in ensuring we can reach our net zero ambitions and drive the recovery of nature on land. Currently a perverse subsidy system means that farmers are often disincentivised from working with nature and from farming in a truly sustainable way. Our exit from the EU means that new agricultural policies are being developed. At Westminster, the UK Government is proposing a new ‘public money for public goods system’, moving subsidies away from a direct payment scheme and into schemes that reward farmers for environmental and social benefits provided by the land.

Whilst a lot of focus has been put on the subsidy system needed to help support the recovery of nature and to help us achieve net zero goals, less attention has been given to how to transition the farming industry to this significantly altered subsidy system in a way that ensures a sustainable and diverse industry. Currently, no government across the UK has put forward a compelling case on how to transition to a substantially changed agricultural system in a way that actively supports a diverse range of farmers to stay in the industry and that maintains a level of subsidy required to meet our environmental objectives.

Additionally, changes both to land use and diet will be needed if the UK is to meet its net zero ambitions. Whilst the UK has some of the lowest food prices in Europe\(^3\), the number of people accessing food banks is at an all-time high\(^4\). It is also estimated that the UK wasted around 9.5 million tonnes of food in 2018, equating to a value of about £19 billion a year, and around 25 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions\(^5\). Ambitious proposals are needed to eliminate food waste and reduce consumption of the most carbon-intensive foods whilst promoting nature-friendly farming techniques and ensuring that everyone has access to healthy foods at affordable prices.

This call for evidence seeks out research, experience and proposals to support a just transition to new agricultural and food policies that support healthy and sustainable diets whilst tackling the dual climate and nature crises. Therefore, we are looking to answer questions under two main themes:

- How to ensure that the transition to a new subsidy system is a just one that supports a truly sustainable agricultural industry.
- How to support a move to less-carbon intensive, more sustainable and affordable diets.

QUESTIONS

A Just Transition

1. The UK Government has proposed a seven-year transition to a new subsidy system in England. What support will be needed to ensure that any transition is a just one and what approach should be taken to during the transition period, including on the reduction of Direct Payments?

\(^3\) [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Comparative_price_levels_for_food,_beverages_and_tobacco](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Comparative_price_levels_for_food,_beverages_and_tobacco)


2. How should transition be managed in a way that engages the agricultural industry and ensures buy-in and support for the new agricultural and land management policies?

3. How can we ensure that we maintain high agricultural standards during the transition both at home and through imports?

4. What other measures are needed, beyond the government’s new subsidy system, to secure a just transition to a sustainable agricultural industry?

**Sustainable food and diets**

5. How can Government (and others) champion a reduction in consumption of carbon-intensive foods and promote sustainable diets in a way that is accessible for all?

6. What procurement policies are needed to improve transparency, sustainability and fairness in supply chains?

**HOW TO SUBMIT EVIDENCE**

This call for evidence is open until Monday 23rd March 2020.

Submissions, of no more than 2,000 words, can be made in writing, and preferably sent as an attachment to ejc@ippr.org.

If you do not wish your submission to be made public, please state this clearly at the start of your submission. Respondents may publicise their written evidence themselves, but in doing so should indicate that it was prepared for the Commission. When responding, please ensure that you include your relevant contact details. Evidence should be attributed and dated, with a note of your name and, if applicable, your position. Please state whether you are responding as an individual or representing an organisation. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please make it clear whom the organisation represents and, where applicable, how the views of members were assembled.