

## ENVIRONMENT: Priorities for the next Government 2015

**'A more holistic approach is needed; creating long-term strategies to tackle environmental challenges'** was the key message from the Parliamentary launch of SocEnv's report ahead of the 2015 General Election.

The publication offers a diverse menu of policy ideas from across many of the professional bodies the Society represents and was launched with a panel debate chaired by leading environmentalist Tony Juniper, President of the Society. Juniper said:

*"Today's report confirms once more that achieving a healthy environment is far from marginal to Britain's interests. Looking after where we live, both globally and locally, is vital for our long-term health, wealth and security and must be a far more prominent agenda as we approach the election."*

The main points raised in the report include:

- the importance of the UK leading on climate agreements and embedding the environment across education in order to challenge and change behaviours;
- supporting the call for a Nature and Wellbeing Bill, a new Air Quality Strategy and highlighting the vital importance of soil protection;
- asking that energy be regarded as an ecosystem and recommending low carbon energy policy measures from energy production, through supply to consumption; and
- exploring the long term commitments needed to build a resilient UK and create a circular economy, which will return resources to the UK and create jobs.

Panel guests included:

- Martin Baxter, Director of Policy, Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment;
- Peter Jones OBE, Chair of Former Director of Biffa Waste Services Ltd, Board Member of Policy Connect;
- Prof Mark Kibblewhite, President of the Institution of Agricultural Engineers, Principal of MK Soil Science and Emeritus Professor at Cranfield University;
- Prof Geoffrey Maitland, President of the Institution of Chemical Engineers and Professor of Energy Engineering, Imperial College London; and
- Barry Sherman MP, Chair of the Skills Commission