

25 January 2011

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Dear Chair

Subject: Risks to Health From Climate Change

As you may be aware, the changing climate in the UK is expected to bring hotter drier summers, milder wetter winters, and more frequent extreme weather events, such as flooding and heatwaves some of which have already occurred in recent years (UK Climate projections 2009).

Floods, droughts, heatwaves, changing disease patterns and migration will affect human health and place increased burdens on public health and health-care systems. Preparing for climate change impacts and addressing existing health needs of vulnerable populations will increase the resilience of these populations to climate change.

As a valued scientific committee, we are seeking your advice on two key questions

- **What short, medium and long term impacts will climate change have on your areas of expertise?**
- **What adaptation measures are / will be needed to minimise these impacts?**

Your response to these questions will feed into the Department of Health's input to the development of the national Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) required under the Climate Change Act (2008).

The Climate Change Act commits the UK Government to carry out an assessment of the risks to the UK of climate change every five years. The first cycle is required to report to Parliament by January 2012.

The CCRA will draw together evidence and analysis which will enable all UK Administrations to understand the level of risk (including opportunities as well as threats) posed by climate change for the UK, where risk is a consideration of the likelihood of an impact and the magnitude of the consequences.

A paper outlining some of the key issues relating to the risks to health from climate change is attached for your consideration. If you would like a member of the DH climate change adaptation team to meet with you to discuss this in more detail or present to your committee we would be happy to arrange this.

Please respond to me, Louise.Newport@dh.gsi.gov.uk, with your advice by Monday April 4th 2011.

Kind regards

Dr Louise Newport
Scientific Policy Manager, Climate Change (Adaptation)