

Jen Anderson  
Chief Officer  
Scottish Environment Link

Our ref: A5387967  
6 March 2013

Dear Jen

Thank you for your letter of 20 February about voluntary environment sector representation in stakeholder processes. I apologise for the delay in replying.

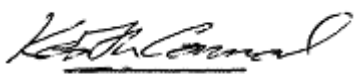
I appreciate that there have been issues in the past with regard to specific groups. As discussed at the last LINK meeting with the Minister, it is important that Government is able to invite individuals to be members of certain groups but we will look to make clear from the outset whether they are being invited on a personal basis or if they are being invited to represent an organisation. Where we are seeking a representative view across environmental NGOs, we will approach LINK. This is already happening, for example I know Jonathan MacLure from my team recently asked LINK to identify a representative for the working group that will be considering agri-environment options for the new SRDP.

If there is doubt about which organisation someone is being asked to represent I would ask that LINK flag this up at an early stage so that clarity can be sought.

Decisions about how many places are available to LINK, or indeed any other organisation, will be made on a case by case basis depending on the topic and structure of the issue in question.

I am aware that LINK has also requested an update on future public sector funding for LINK's voluntary sector intermediary roles. As we discussed at the last Ministerial meeting, we have confirmed in writing the amount of funding available during the current spending review and clarified that at this stage we are not able to commit funding beyond that period.

Yours sincerely,



**Keith Connal**