



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

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The Rt Hon Lord Boswell  
Chairman  
Select Committee on the European Union  
House of Lords  
London  
SW1A 0PW

10 January 2019

*Dear Sir,*

**EM 11561/18: REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL ASSESSING MEMBER STATES' PROGRAMMES OF MEASURES UNDER THE MARINE STRATEGY FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE**

Thank you for your letter of 19 December 2018.

We note that you have decided to retain under scrutiny EM 11561/18 on the Commission's staff working document assessing Member States' programmes of measures under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, subject to obtaining clarity on two particular issues.

Regarding your request for an update on Gibraltar becoming a Contracting Party to the Barcelona Convention, we can assure you that discussions have been ongoing between the UK Government and HM Government of Gibraltar on this issue.

You also asked whether Cefas shares our view that attempting to remove chemicals from marine sediment would not only be expensive but could also exacerbate the problem by releasing them back into the marine environment. I can confirm that Cefas shares this view.

We trust that these explanations address your questions, and are happy to provide further advice if necessary.

I am copying this letter to Sir William Cash MP, Chairman of the European Scrutiny Committee. I am also copying this letter to the Clerks of the Commons and Lords Committees, Lynn Gardner and Chris Johnson respectively; Les Saunders, Department for Exiting the European Union; and Tess Hanneman, Defra Scrutiny Coordinator.

Yours sincerely,

*Thérèse*

**DR THERESE COFFEY MP**

