

Triennial Reviews Team
Area 6B
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR

From the Biological Secretary and Vice-President Sir John Skehel FMedSci FRS

25 April 2014
Our ref: JS/NG/JB

Dear Sirs

The Royal Society welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Triennial Reviews of the Science Advisory Council (SAC) and the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment (ACRE). Independent expert advice is vital to good policy development and building trust in the policy-making process. To help achieve this one of the Society's aims is to ensure that policy-makers and individual citizens alike can engage with the science that underpins the functioning of modern life. The provision of independent expert advice through bodies, such as SAC and ACRE, to policymakers is vital in achieving this.

The Society welcomed the establishment of the SAC in 2004 to provide Defra's Chief Scientific Adviser with essential independent assurance and challenge, which still remains important ten years on. Similarly, ACRE allows ministers to access independent, timely expert advice on the release of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). The recent Public Attitudes to Science 2014 survey highlighted the key role of independent expert advice that is delivered in a transparent way in underpinning public confidence in the regulation of GMOs.

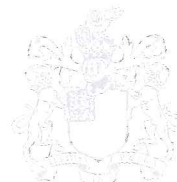
Please do not hesitate to contact me if you think there is any way in which the Society can contribute further to your review.

Yours faithfully



John Skehel

+44 20 7451 2661
john.skehel@royalsociety.org



President Sir Paul Nurse
Executive Director Dr Julie Maxton

Founded in 1660, the Royal Society is the independent scientific academy of the UK, dedicated to promoting excellence in science.

Registered Charity No 207043