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D John

E(ST)(O) DISCUSSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

I am replying to your letter of 6 October to John Fairclough. He is in the USA this week, but I have been able to speak to him.

Because your office had been in touch last week in connection with the timing of the E(ST)(O) discussion on environmental issues, before he left John reviewed the possibility of changing the meeting date but did not wish to do so. It is unsatisfactory if you or another senior colleague cannot attend due to commitments elsewhere on 9 November; and I accept there is a need to consult with the Research Councils and that this will take time. In these circumstances we could agree that the absolute deadline for receipt of a DES paper for the meeting is Friday 27 October - but this depends on other contributions arriving by the earlier date. I hope that this relaxation will give you the leeway necessary to produce your paper.

The discussion will continue the dialogue begun at the E(ST)(O) meeting on 16 January by providing an update on progress over the last year and on departments plans for the future. Account will be taken of the new Ministerial groups. It is not the intention at this stage to come to firm decisions on research priorities. Resource constraints will, of course, affect the final outcome on that score.

I am copying this letter to other members of E(ST)(O).

Yours,
C R Walker

C R WALKER