From Andrew Miller MP, Chair

Jean-Claude Juncker  
President of the European Commission  
Brussels

20 November 2014

I am writing to you as Chair of the Science and Technology Select Committee of the UK House of Commons.

My Committee has a remit to understand and scrutinise the UK Government’s use of science and how it applies the information from its Office for Science within policy across the whole of the UK Government. That often means that my Committee scrutinises policy that derives from the EU that is later applied in the UK.

A persistent theme in our scrutiny is whether UK (and EU) policy takes scientific evidence into account and whether there are appropriate mechanisms in place to ensure that policy-makers have access to robust scientific advice and demonstrate that they have taken that evidence into account when making policy decisions.

It was with profound concern that we read that the ground-breaking role of Chief Scientific Adviser to the President’s office, mirroring an arrangement here in the UK that we have found to be very successful, was to be discontinued. Our concern was not specifically that role but, in all the UK media coverage, that there was no indication as to whether the role would be replaced, like for like, or whether you would be ensuring that your office and the wider policy-making in the EU would be provided with an alternative process of gaining independent scientific advice.

I am hoping that you will be able to write to my Committee to reassure us that the Commission has a plan for how the Commission intends to replace the function (independent scientific advice to policy-makers at all levels) if not the actual role of Chief Scientific Adviser.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Miller  
Chair