

Inter Ministerial Group for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (IMG EFRA) Communiqué

25 March 2019

The Inter Ministerial Group for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs met on Monday at 2 Marsham Street in London. The meeting was chaired by Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

The attending Ministers were:

From the UK government:

- the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
- the Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Robert Goodwill MP
- the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Scotland and Northern Ireland, Lord Duncan
- the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Wales Nigel Adams MP

From the Welsh Government: The Minister for Energy, Environment and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths AM

From the Scottish Government:

- the Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy, Fergus Ewing MSP
- the Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment, Mairi Gougeon, MSP

The Permanent Secretary at the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Denis McMahon attended the meeting in the absence of a Northern Ireland Executive.

The Chair opened the meeting by providing an update on the UK's exit from the EU. The group discussed recent developments and implications for the Withdrawal Agreement and future negotiations.

Discussions focused on the potential impacts of a no-deal outcome, noting these would be damaging and were highly undesirable. It would mean key sectors would come under significant stress and disruption. The group considered the funding and other support needs which would arise and that devolved administrations did not have financial allocations to meet such needs without further UK government provision. Ministers wanted to ensure the wellbeing and welfare of individuals in affected sectors was appropriately addressed.

The Group also discussed business preparedness and communications and updates on secondary and primary legislation.