

1 July 2020 – for immediate release

APPG welcomes R&D roadmap and Govt’s ambition to cement UK as a science superpower

Julian Sturdy MP, chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Science and Technology in Agriculture, has welcomed this week’s [R&D Roadmap](#) announcement by Government as a clear signal that the UK is set on a pro-science, pro-innovation trajectory to deliver economic growth and to help address global challenges such as climate change, food security and sustainable development.

“Today’s announcement, setting out the Government’s vision to attract global talent, cut unnecessary bureaucracy and cement the UK as a global science superpower is particularly welcome in the agri-science sector, where the UK boasts world-leading research expertise and where there are exciting prospects not only to improve the productivity, efficiency and sustainability of British agriculture and horticulture, but also to generate much needed economic growth, jobs, export earnings and inward investment.

“This is particularly true in relation to genetic innovation, where the UK has been held back by unscientific EU rules, and where a more science-based approach to regulation could open up significant opportunities to keep pace with demands for increased agricultural productivity, resource-use efficiency, more durable pest and disease resistance, improved nutrition and resilience to climate change.”

“That’s why the All-Party Group is urging the Government to support an enabling amendment to the Agriculture Bill, paving the way for the Secretary of State to consult on and, if appropriate, make a simple change to the Environmental Protection Act giving Britain’s scientists, farmers, plant breeders and animal breeders the same access to new precision breeding techniques as their counterparts around the world.”

“In line with today’s announcement, early action by Government to support this important amendment will provide a clear signal that as we emerge from the COVID-19 crisis we will use the best available science to address critical challenges of climate, food security and nutrition, global inequality and sustainability while at the same time supporting the rural economy and strengthening the UK’s position as a global hub for investment and research,” said Mr Sturdy.

ENDS

Note to Editors

Julian Sturdy MP, chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Science and Technology in Agriculture, wrote to Defra Secretary Rt Hon George Eustice MP on 7 May 2020 calling on the Government to support a targeted amendment to the Agriculture Bill, paving the way for the UK to adopt a regulatory definition of GMO compatible with the internationally recognised Cartagena Protocol, and thereby exempt simple gene editing applications from the scope of

GM regulation and bring UK law into line with the regulatory stance of other countries around the world, such as the US, Argentina, Brazil, Australia and Japan.

A copy of the text of the letter is available [here](#)

A statement by the APPG is available [here](#)

Follow the progress of this initiative on Twitter @appg_agscience

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