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Subject: Greening of the European Semester: environmentally harmful subsidies
and implementation of environmental legislation

- Exchange of views
- = Contributions from delegations

Delegations will find in the Annex a contribution received from the United Kingdom to the exchange of views at the Council (Environment) on 26 October 2015.

The UK very much welcomes the Commission's shift in focus from proposing new legislation to improving how existing environmental laws are implemented. Better implementation will lead to better environmental outcomes. In the process, we should not inadvertently introduce complex mechanisms that lead to additional bureaucracy. We do not want to divert resources from delivering environmental outcomes on the ground.

With respect to the European Semester, the UK supports this as a means to coordinate Member States' budgetary, employment and structural reforms at EU level. The 2014 Environment Council conclusions provide a framework for greening the Semester whilst maintaining the focus on jobs and growth.

Finally, the UK very much supports the aim of phasing out environmentally harmful subsidies and we are pleased to note that the UK doesn't have any fossil fuel subsidies. In this context, the UK welcomes changes that were made to the Common Agricultural Policy with the aim of improving its environmental delivery. Pillar 2 is an important mechanism through which to do this. The reform of the Common Fisheries Policy has also been an important step. It has ensured that the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund moves towards measures that will support the long term economic, social and environmental sustainability of the sector.
