

Nature Check 2012: Parliamentary launch
Joan Walley MP, Chair of the Environmental Audit Committee
speech summary

On behalf of Elaine and all members of Link – I would like to welcome the Secretary of State, guests and members of both houses to today's launch. It is right the launch is being done in Parliament. This is a **vital report** and this is going to be a very **important session**. When we look at the way the select committee works in the house, there needs to be more understanding of the connections between Government, constituents and the way in which constituents are in touch with MPs. There also needs to be more understanding of how we all integrate issues of wildlife, countryside, sustainable development and nature.

This is a very important networking event giving **renewed enthusiasm** to the fact that this is an issue which is fundamental and not apart from everything else. If we are to get the green economy right, **we need to make this a major issue at heart of everything we do**.

The Environmental Audit Committee will give the Secretary of State an early opportunity to come before the committee to put his views on record as to whether his Government is the 'greenest Government ever'. But this report has pipped us to the post. Its timing is perfect; just before budget statement which will decide the future of the economy. **The 39 organisations here and the 8 million members they represent will play an important part in helping us to understand how we integrate Sustainable Development into government**. We only have to look at the UN negotiations next week and the more short-term urgency with which we have to tackle flooding. The collaborative partnership you have here is a good opportunity for the Secretary of State to hear the findings of **this most important report**, but also to comment and have a dialogue.

27 November 2012