



## Environment Plan a positive step but further action needed

Theresa May has launched the UK Government's 25 Year Environment Plan.

The Plan outlines ambitions to support farmers improve biodiversity on their lands, create a new post-Brexit environmental watchdog, reduce plastic waste and improve recycling rates.

The REA welcomes the long-term ambition of the plan and notes how compostable packaging, composting, renewable fuels, and biogas can support their aims. The organisation also argues that more support for local authorities and for bringing advanced energy-from-waste technologies to market are needed to truly create a "green Brexit".

Commenting on the Plan, Dr Nina Skorupska CBE, Chief Executive of the REA said:

"We welcome the Government's ambitions laid out here today and believe that the UK's compostable plastics industry can help the Prime Minister address many of the urgent issues raised in this Plan. There are numerous products that are

manufactured in the UK, ranging from coffee cups to carrier bags, that can reduce the non-biodegradable materials polluting our oceans and our countryside.

"Anaerobic digestion and composting can support Government ambitions in relation to soil health by encouraging the cultivation of break crops and the production of digestate and compost, which acts as an organic alternative to fossil fuel derived fertilisers and soil improver to restore organic matter in soil.

"One outstanding question is how does Government intend to support local authorities' waste collection abilities and develop our domestic waste infrastructure? Recycling rates are in decline and food waste collections stalled following years of funding cuts.

"Our discussions indicate a significant ambition within Local Authorities to increase food waste collections and improve recycling collections but many don't have the up-front capital to take action. We also have a budding advanced energy-from-waste sector

which post-Brexit could help us prosper from being waste self-reliant but there is a lack of ambition in Government to help bring such technologies to market.

"The wood heat sector welcomes the ambition to support forest health and growth in the UK, and calls for the Government to consider the planting of short rotation forestry, such as willow, which is shown to improve biodiversity and soil health.

"The renewable fuels industry is encouraged by the Government's ambition to increase the amount of waste that is turned into biofuel, and looks forward to working with them to grow the sector."

25 Year Environment Plan can be found on the Government's website here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

The accompanying press release can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/governments-vision-for-a-greener-future-launched>