



GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
Ministry for Environment and Tourism
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Ernest Britto, Minister for the Environment has responded to recent statements by Opposition Environment spokesman, F Picardo

“The common theme of most GSLP/liberal public statements is their intense criticism of the Government in areas where they did little or nothing when in government themselves, and in which the GSD Government has massively improved what it inherited. This applies to Social Services as well as the Environment, and other policy areas.

The last GSLP Government paid little, if any, attention to the environment. Indeed, a proper Department of the Environment did not exist until one was created and resourced by the GSD Government. Furthermore, when the GSD came into Government in 1996 it found that a very large number of environmental protection directives had been ignored and had not been implemented by the GSLP.

But this is not the end of Mr Picardo's political hypocrisy and cynicism with the electorate. When things don't go well he criticise Ministers. When the Government delivers on a manifesto commitment, he praises officials and still criticises Ministers. He really must think that the people of Gibraltar are very gullible.

Mr Picardo, who cannot at the same time both stick politically to Mr Bossano like glue and ignore Mr Bossano's political past record, says that the proof of the Government's inadequacy on the environment is the fact that the New Power Station has not been built yet! This is truly astonishing given that, in their Manifesto the GSLP/Liberals did not commit themselves to build a new power station. Nor did they

have a commitment to have an Environmental Charter, nor an Action and Management Plan to put it into effect!

Mr Picardo says that the GSD has failed in its Manifesto commitment to provide 12% of energy from renewable sources. Of course, he fails to give people the full facts. This GSD Manifesto commitment in 2007 was in line with EU Environmental obligations as they then were. These were subsequently changed by the EU itself because most EU countries, were failing to meet this 12% target. The EU has set itself an overall target of 20% and each member state has been given a specific target which in the case of UK is 15% of energy from renewable sources by 2020. The Gibraltar Government, like other EU countries, is now working to the new target, both in terms of year and percentage, and has abandoned the old target of 12%. All of this has been explained to Mr Picardo in Parliament.

Mr Picardo says that the “public are too clever to believe that the GSD are committed or able to deliver the implementation of the Plan (Environment Action & Management Plan) into action”.

The public are indeed too clever to be taken in by Mr Picardo’s futile attempts to airbrush away the very significant achievements and progress of this Government on environmental matters, and the GSLP’s own dismal record on environmental matters when they were in Government.

Of course, people will already have noticed, from several recent opposition statements the tactic that they have chosen in order to combat the political effect of the huge Government action programme that is now coming to fruition in many areas of life in Gibraltar: They dismiss everything, even projects and initiatives that have been years in the making, as “last minute electoral gimmicks”. Unfortunately for Mr Picardo and his party, the public are indeed clever and astute!