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Roadmaps to Regulation: NPS

Amanda Feilding & Nicola Singleton TBC

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Amanda Feilding and the Beckley Foundation have released the Novel Psychoactive Substances chapter of its upcoming report, "Roadmaps to Regulation: Cannabis, MDMA, Psychedelics and Novel Psychoactive Substances". The launch of this chapter on 26 May 2016 coincides with the date that the latest piece of scientifically illiterate legislation comes into force: The Psychoactive Substances Act 2016.

The report condemns the UK Government's approach of introducing a blanket ban on the supply and production of psychoactive substances as scientifically ill-founded, legally dubious, misguided and potentially harmful.

The Beckley Foundation offer an alternative option similar to the system in New Zealand, which would allow new psychoactive substances to go through safety trials, and those drugs which proved low-risk would be made available for sale in a strictly regulated legal market.

The UK is undergoing a growing problem with "legal highs", particularly the use of synthetic cannabinoids such as "Spice" and "Black Mamba." Rather than addressing the root issue, an unabated demand for cannabis, the Government has attempted to ban all psychoactive substances. This will drive producers and retailers underground, funding criminal organisation, increasing the harms associated with drug use and not reducing the use of psychoactive substances.

Amanda Feilding comments, "The explosion of NPS is a result of the prohibition of the classical psychoactive substances, such as cannabis, MDMA, psychedelics and stimulants. If there was legal regulation of these substances, there would be no need for the creation of new, and most often inferior imitations".

Rather than look at the issue of drug use as a whole, the response has been traditionally whack-a-mole as new drugs inevitably enter the market. In an attempt to end this game of cat and mouse, the government has created the widest ban they could conceive of, in the face of overwhelming criticism from lawyers and scientists alike.

NOTES FOR THE EDITOR

The **Beckley Foundation** is a UK-based think-tank and research centre that, since its establishment in 1998 by its Executive Director Amanda Feilding, has been at the forefront of scientific research into the mechanisms of action and potential medical benefits of psychoactive substances, and of global drug policy reform. Its Scientific Programme uses the latest developments in neuroscience and neuroimaging technology in order to explore how psychoactive substances act upon the human brain, both to increase our scientific understanding of the mysteries underlying consciousness, and to open up new avenues of treatment for mankind's many illnesses.

Interviews: Amanda Feilding, author of the report, will be available to be interviewed. Please contact the Beckley Foundation, details below.

For Further Information:

Please contact Rosalind Stone, Hattie Wells or Vivian Kear
01865 351 209 or office@beckleyfoundation.org