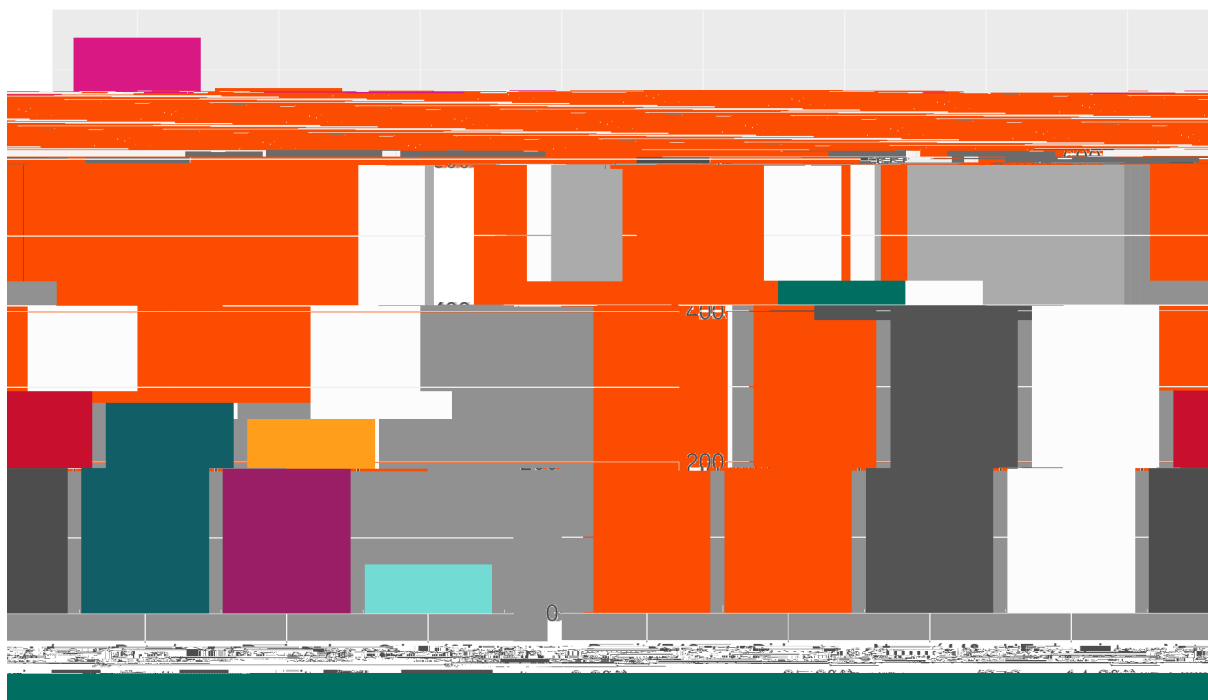




Throughout the survey the role of chemistry in tackling global challenges around the environment and health, related to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, emerged as the highest priority. Notably, there appeared to be some ambiguity in this question, as the free text responses indicated that people interpreted it in different ways. Some people focused on the importance of communicating to the public or policy makers how science is helping to tackle global challenges, and some focused more on advocacy for action on the global challenges themselves. Respondents were also asked to score individual global challenges on a 0 to 10 scale for importance. The most important issues for the chemical sciences within the theme of global challenges across the survey were those relating to the environment, sustainability and climate change. These areas were one of the most common themes within free text responses and tackling climate change had the highest proportion of 9 and 10 ratings of any policy area in the survey (64%).

Tying in with the importance of environmental issues, sustainable chemicals management was one of the other broad policy areas which came out as a high priority, with 54 % of respondents rating it 9 or 10. When invited to rank different aspects of this broad policy area, respondents indicated that it is important for the UK to have high standards of chemicals management with regulations that align with those in the EU. Furthermore, respondents felt it was important for such regulations to be formed on scientific advice, highlighting the need for expert input from bodies like the RSC and clear dissemination of relevant evidence. This reflected a general trend in the survey of comments stressing the importance



*Figure 2. Policy areas which respondents felt were more important than the broad areas suggested in the survey.*

The results of this survey will inform our science policy priorities for 2020-22 on environment and regulation, research landscape and industry. These priorities are also informed by evidence from our February policy survey on Brexit-related work, the recently-published [Science Horizons report](#), our conversations with the decision-makers we seek to influence and with our member communities. The policy themes have now been agreed by the appropriate RSC decision-making body.

The priority areas our policy and advocacy work will focus on in 2020 to 2022 are as follows:

. : Research on workforce skills needs, in which we will look for opportunities to build evidence on chemistry and regional development. Research on

. We will continue circular economy work on electronic wastes, building on our elements in danger campaign and promoting our policy position on critical raw materials in electronic waste. We will also continue to highlight the role of chemistry in developing sustainable plastics, advocating our policy position on plastic waste, which draws on Sustainable Plastics - the role of chemistry. In addition, we will develop and advocate for policy positions on climate change and sustainable water. These four areas are prioritised in line with survey data and our work is supported by scientific input from RSC divisions and other member communities.

: Advocating for research funding that is transparent, based on merit, independent of political priorities and timescales, meets the needs of chemistry and supports collaboration. (This covers