

The Rt Hon Thérèse Coffey MP  
Secretary of State  
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Sent by email to: [therese.coffey.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:therese.coffey.mp@parliament.uk)

Dear Thérèse

### **Environmental growth**

We met when I chaired the House of Lords EU Environment Committee. I also chair the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Nature Partnership.

The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Nature Partnership is a very active LNP here in the far south-west. We have a board that is representative of our wildlife trusts, regulators, local authorities, MPs, farmers, universities, and those involved in marine conservation.

At our most recent board meeting we considered the impact of recent and impending legislation and its potential effect on biodiversity, the recovery of nature and our broader environment here in Cornwall and Scilly. We have a number of real concerns. The board has asked me to write to you as Secretary of State to raise those issues.

### **ELMS**

We applaud the Government's 'public money for public goods' approach to agricultural payments and the motivations behind the Environmental Land Management scheme. However, we are concerned at the level of uncertainty about the future of the scheme, not least while the basic payments system continues to wind down. We very much hope that the scheme will keep its original values and focus on reversing the loss of biodiversity while maintaining food security, not just now but in the long term. We also hope that levels of ambition and resourcing within the higher tiers of the scheme – Local Nature Recovery and Landscape Recovery – will be upheld.

### **Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill**

This is our area of gravest concern. We have no issue with EU laws being replaced by new legislation that strengthens environmental regulation or makes environmental legislation more practical to implement while not diluting outcomes.

However, the idea of a sunset clause that rubs out the large bulk of our environmental rulebook by the end of 2023, only 13 months away, seems impractical, a danger to our environment, and a route to profound legal uncertainty. We do not understand how DEFRA has the capacity to replace this legislation within the timeframe set out in the Bill. As the Office of Environmental

Protection has stated 'Good environmental law making requires time to gather evidence of environmental problems and to consider how they can best be solved'.

As a Local Nature Partnership, we have welcomed the Government's 25-year Environmental Plan and its aspirations, but we feel very strongly that the Retained EU Law Bill is likely to undermine plans and the Government's ambition to be the first generation to leave the environment in a better state than in which it found it.

### **Environmental targets and deadlines**

The Government's Environment Act has been a vital and progressive piece of legislation. But like many other we are concerned that the deadline for environmental targets has been missed. If, as a consequence, they can reflect ambitious COP15 targets then that would be positive, but there appears to be a general slowness of meeting legislative deadlines in the environmental area.

As a region of the UK with strong maritime connections and an important fishing industry we were pleased to see the publication this month of the Joint Fisheries Statement. We hope that this can now lead to the rapid adoption of fisheries management plans.

### **Sewage discharges**

As in many other areas, here in the far South West we are concerned at the excessive number of sewage discharges that occur into our coastal waters. Cornwall and Scilly are surrounded by sea. We ask that action is taken to ensure that Ofwat and the water companies take solving this issue once and for all seriously, with substantial further investment. Nature based solutions could have a major role here.

Our board looks forward to your reply.

With kind regards

