



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

25th June 2021

New Confront,

RE: THE ENVIRONMENT BILL

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of the progress of the *Environment Bill*.

I am pleased that this Government remains fully committed to the *Environment Bill* as a key part of delivering the manifesto commitment to create the most ambitious environmental programme of any country on Earth. The Bill has now completed its journey through the House of Commons and will now be debated in the House of Lords, with Royal Assent expected in the Autumn. I am assured that key work on implementing the Bill's measures continues at pace, including establishing the Office for Environmental Protection (OEP), setting long-term legally-binding targets for environmental protection and creating a new Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers.

The *Environment Bill* will place environmental ambition and accountability at the heart of government. I am pleased that legislative measures will be introduced to address the biggest environmental priorities of our age, ensuring that we can deliver on the commitment to leave the natural world in a better condition than we found it. These will include meeting net-zero by 2050, as well as wider long-term legally binding targets on biodiversity, air quality, water, and resource and waste efficiency which will be established under the Bill. The Bill will also give Ministers the powers to tackle storm overflows.

Furthermore, the Government intends to amend the Bill in the House of Lords to include a new, historic, legally binding target on species abundance for 2030, aiming to halt the decline of nature. This is a pioneering measure that will be the net-zero equivalent for nature, spurring action on the scale required to address the biodiversity crisis. A forthcoming Green Paper will also explore how Ministers might deliver their world-leading domestic ambitions for nature, including how to improve the status of native species, such as the water vole and the red squirrel, and protect 30 percent of our land by 2030.

I agree that deforestation must be tackled if we are to achieve our climate and biodiversity targets. I am therefore pleased that last year the Government set out its approach to tackling deforestation linked to UK demand for products such as cocoa, rubber, soya, and palm oil. Combined, the new package of measures will ensure that greater resilience, traceability and sustainability are built into the UK's supply chains by working in partnership with other countries and supporting farmers to transition to more sustainable food and land use systems.



The measures include the introduction of a new law in the *Environment Bill* which will require greater due diligence from businesses and make it illegal for UK businesses to use key commodities if they have not been produced in line with local laws protecting forests and other natural ecosystems. The final, operational details of the proposal will be implemented through secondary legislation, which will be subject to further consultation. This will consider which commodities will be prescribed, the thresholds that determine which businesses will be subject to the requirements, the precise information businesses will be required to report on and the level of fines.

I really welcome that in the year of COP26, the *Environment Bill* is at the core of delivering the Government's manifesto commitment to deliver the most ambitious environmental programme of any country and ensure that it remains as we found it.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes
Tom

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**