

## Bonfire of Environmental Protections

Nature in the UK is facing unprecedented threats from recently announced or reported proposals by the government. We are shocked by these proposals and think it is essential that we object to this damaging and short-sighted course of action.

The threats are wide ranging and severe. Key amongst these is the removal of vital environmental protections, including many derived from EU law which the *Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill* seeks to extinguish unless steps are taken to save or replace them. Amongst the protections at risk are rules that safeguard hundreds of species and wildlife sites and laws that stop pollution in our air, rivers and seas. This is compounded by proposals to restart fracking and halt the Environmental Land Management schemes (ELMs), which promised to facilitate vital biodiversity regeneration and carbon sequestration in our countryside.

The nature community has been united in opposition to these proposals with, amongst others, the RSPB and the Wildlife Trusts vehemently objecting. In our view these proposals are a dereliction of the government's duty to protect the public good that is nature and enhance it for future generations.

If you wish to push back on these potentially disastrous proposals, one immediate action you can take is to write to your local MP, County and Borough Councillors. An easy way to do this is via the "Write To Them" website (<https://www.writetothem.com/>).

In case helpful, we have copied below some example letters already sent by members of GEF to Angela Richardson, MP for Guildford ([angela.richardson.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:angela.richardson.mp@parliament.uk)). We have also set out below links to key government proposals and helpful output on this matter from national organisations.

As this crisis develops, GEF will consider carefully what other actions we can take as a group and part of the wider nature community to push back on this affront to nature.

Kind regards,

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### LINKS TO KEY GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS

- [\*Retained EU Law \(Revocation and Reform\) Bill\*](#)
- [\*Investment Zones\*](#)
- [\*Government statement on ending the moratorium on fracking\*](#)
- [\*Media report on scrapping Environmental Land Management Scheme \(ELMS\)\*](#)

### LINKS TO OUTPUT FROM NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

- <https://ptes.org/open-letter-to-pm-on-environmental-deregulation/>
- <https://action.rspb.org.uk/page/114089/action/1>
- <https://action.wildlifetrusts.org/page/114098/tweet/1>
- <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/get-involved/our-campaigns/defend-nature>

**EXAMPLE EMAIL 1:**

*Dear Angela,*

*I'm emailing you today as I am extremely concerned about the actions taken by the government in the last week. I am one of your constituents in Guildford.*

*Firstly, I understand that the ban on fracking has been lifted. Fracking is not only environmentally disastrous but is a real short-term measure. True investment in green energy would be not only a better long-term plan financially, but would be environmentally positive.*

*Secondly, I am deeply concerned about the retained EU law bill from the point of view of the vast number of environmental Regulations affected. I understand that this raft of regulations are subject to sunset provisions and so will simply disappear from the UK law by the end of this year unless steps are taken to save or replace them. The environmental regulations are truly vital to the UK environment and cover things such as river pollution, air pollution, species and habitat protection and marine pollution. It is essential that the environmental laws in the UK are not eroded.*

*Finally, I understand that there is a suggestion that the government plans to scrap the rewards given to farmers for managing their land in an environmental way. The environmental land management scheme was devised by the Conservatives to encourage farmers to create space for rare species. Pilot schemes have created rare habitats and brought back species, including nightingales beavers and white storks. I understand that land owners who have been part of Elms have now been told that the scheme is paused.*

*I would be grateful for your comments on the above.*

*Kind regards,*

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**EXAMPLE EMAIL 2:**

*Dear Angela Richardson,*

*I am quite frankly shocked at the press reports of the government's intended attack on nature in this country. The combination of stripping environmental protections in the name of quick development, stopping the ELMs scheme and a new rush for shale gas are a dereliction of the government's duty to protect the public good that is nature and enhance it for future generations.*

*I ask you as our MP to do what you can to oppose this. It breaches manifesto pledges, ignores the strong support of nature in this country and reduces the natural capital available for our children in the name of some (supposed) quick bucks.*

*Yours sincerely,*

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