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The Prime Minister
Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer MP
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA

6 December 2024

Dear Prime Minister,

We share your ambition to improve the planning system and to speed up investment in renewable energy infrastructure. We were impressed by Labour's early efforts to deliver development and nature protection together, such as your work on nutrient neutrality protection against river pollution.

Therefore we were dismayed and disappointed to hear your attack on environmental regulations and regulators yesterday.

Environmental planning rules play a vital role in protecting wildlife, stopping pollution, and in ensuring that a healthy environment is for everyone, not just a privilege for those who can afford it. The rules can be improved, but they are not the problem. The regulators that uphold the rules have been slowed down by a decade of cuts and political interference. They should be supported, not vilified.

We want to work with you to speed up planning. We need ambitious reform to ensure the planning system works better for nature too. But deregulation is not the answer.

We hope you will accept our urgent request for a meeting to discuss how we can find win-win solutions for nature and sustainable development.

Yours sincerely,

Beccy Speight, CEO, RSPB

Craig Bennett, CEO, The Wildlife Trusts

Hilary McGrady, Executive Director, The National Trust

Kit Stoner, CEO, Bat Conservation Trust

Dr Darren Moorcroft, CEO, The Woodland Trust

Will McCallum, Co-Executive Director, Greenpeace UK

Julie Williams, CEO, Butterfly Conservation

Mark Lloyd, CEO, The Rivers Trust

Laura Clarke, CEO, ClientEarth

Sarah Fowler, CEO, WWT

Roger Mortlock, CEO, CPRE The Countryside Charity

Ellen Fay, Executive Director, Sustainable Soils Alliance

Brendan Costelloe, Director of Policy & Strategy, The Soil Association

Gill Perkins, CEO, Bumblebee Conservation Trust

James Wallace, CEO, River Action

Catherine Gunby, Executive Director, Fidra

Neil Redfern, Executive Director, Council for British Archaeology

Tony Gent, CEO, Amphibian & Reptile Conservation Trust

Dr Rose O'Neill, CEO, Campaign for National Parks

Fay Vass, CEO, British Hedgehog Preservation Society

Sally Hayns, CEO, CIEEM

Ross Maloney, Chief Executive, The Ramblers

Martin Janes, Managing Director, the River Restoration Centre

Nida Al-Fulaij, CEO, People's Trust for Endangered Species

Chris Butler-Stroud, CEO, Whale & Dolphin Conservation

Kate Ashbrook, General Secretary, Open Spaces Society

Matt Larsen-Daw, CEO, The Mammal Society

Sue Sayer, Founder and Director, Seal Research Trust

Dr Stephen Head, Founder Patron, Wildlife Gardening Forum

Sandy Luk, CEO, Marine Conservation Society

Dr Richard Benwell, CEO, Wildlife & Countryside Link