**Template letter for Environment Bill’s Report Stage**

**Tuesday 26th January**

Dear XXX,

I’m writing to you about the Environment Bill, which is due to have its report stage in the House of Commons on Tuesday 26th January.

The Environment Bill is a vital piece of legislation which will play a decisive role in how the UK tackles the nature and climate crisis in the coming decades. It includes important measures on the critical foundations of our natural environment - nature, air, water, and resources and waste - and will create a new environmental governance system for England and Northern Ireland. In short, the Environment Bill is a crucial opportunity to put in place the measures needed to reverse nature’s decline and tackle climate change.

Support from all sides of the House is required to ensure the Bill is effective at helping to halt the loss of nature and set our environment on the path to significant improvement. The Environment Bill offers us a chance to leave behind toxic air, plastic pollution and wildlife losses and move towards a brighter, greener future.

Whilst we welcome much of the Bill and its ambitions, there are some key areas in which The Wildlife Trusts and Greener UK believe the Environment Bill needs amending to reach that ambition:

* **A new ‘State of Nature’ target (NC5) -** Last year, the Government signed up to the ‘Leaders’ Pledge for Nature’ – committing themselves to reversing biodiversity loss by 2030. This amendment would put that goal on the face of the Bill through a binding target to halt and begin to reverse the decline in the state of nature within a decade.
* **A stronger duty to use Local Nature Recovery Strategies (29)** – Local Nature Recovery Strategies have the potential to be an extremely effective tool for targeting investment in nature, but they won’t reach their full potential unless there is a much stronger requirement to take them into account when making key decisions, such as on planning and spending.
* **Legally binding interim targets** **(5)** – this amendment would ensure that the Government is committed to making the progress needed now in order to meet their long-term environmental targets.
* **Independence for the Office of Environmental Protection (23)** – Clause 24 requires the OEP to have regard to guidance given by the Secretary of State on its enforcement powers. This undermines the OEP’s independence and renders the Government’s ambition for a world leading watchdog impossible to achieve. This amendment would remove that power.

As one of the most nature depleted countries in the world, action must start at home if the Government is serious about protecting our natural environment for future generations. I would be delighted if you were able to raise the issues highlighted above in Parliament and to support the amendments which aim to rectify these concerns.

I have attached two briefings which set out these priority areas in more detail. Also attached is our briefing on the Government’s recent decision to authorise the neonicotinoid, thiamethoxam, an incredibly harmful pesticide. The Wildlife Trusts strongly oppose this decision and are urging the Government to think again.

If you have further questions, please do get in touch. I hope you will be able to speak up for nature at this crucial time.

Best wishes,

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