

Dr Roz Savage
MBE MP
Member of
Parliament for South
Cotswolds



The Rt Hon Angela Eagle MP

Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Tuesday 11th August 2026

Dear Secretary of State,

Re: The Climate and Nature Bill

May I first congratulate you on your appointment as Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Defra's role could not be more important to the future of this country than at this very moment, and I look forward to working constructively with you to continue to construct and implement an effective climate and nature agenda.

I write further to the statement on the State of Climate and Nature delivered to the House on the 13th of July by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Mary Creagh, and to my own contribution to that debate. As you will be aware, this was the second such annual statement, made good on a commitment secured during the passage of my Climate and Nature Bill (the "CAN Bill") in January last year. I wanted to take this opportunity, as you settle into your new role, to remind you of the reasoning and the spirit that lay behind that Bill, and behind the commitments the Government subsequently made.

Rather than striving to hit isolated targets, the CAN Bill rests on three connected principles: first, that the climate and nature crises are two faces of the same emergency and must be tackled simultaneously, not in departmental silos; second, that our international commitments to restoring nature and cutting emissions should be enshrined in law, with clear accountability to Parliament, rather than left to aspiration; and third, that the transition must be just and fair, particularly to farmers and land managers who act as frontline custodians of our natural world, and to those communities bearing the sharpest edge of flooding, heatwaves and rising costs.

Although the Bill itself did not proceed, the Government's negotiated commitments were substantial: closer working between Defra and the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, better accounting for our emissions and nature impacts overseas, sustained public engagement, and — most visibly and recently relevant — an annual statement to this House from the Secretaries of State on progress against climate and nature goals. The July statement was a welcome step in honouring that promise. But as I noted in the debate, welcome funding announcements sit alongside some sobering gaps: on current trends the 30 by 30 target will not be met, Natural England has not designated a single new Site of Special Scientific Interest in three years, and the area covered by such sites has grown by just 2.8%



in twenty years. Warm words and one-off funding pots will not close that gap; sustained investment and delivery will.

I am sure you have your work cut out for you already, especially considering the catastrophic heat waves, and the subsequent disruption to agriculture and rural life. I do not raise this to relitigate old arguments therefore, but because I believe the reasoning behind the CAN Bill is, if anything, more urgent now than when I introduced it. I would be very glad to meet with you, at your convenience, to discuss how we can build on the progress made so far and ensure the spirit of those commitments is carried through into delivery. I remain ready to work across party lines, as I always have on this issue, in service of that goal.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Roz Savage".

Dr Roz Savage MBE
Member of Parliament for South Cotswolds