



23rd July 2024

Rt Hon Steve Reed MP
Secretary of State
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Dear Secretary of State,

Many congratulations again on your appointment. We are writing to introduce valuable new research commissioned by the RSPB, The Wildlife Trusts, and National Trust which details the investment needed to deliver the essential natural capital outcomes vital to underpin our future food security, climate adaptation, and rural economies. All these are essential elements for a stable economy, healthy people, and will help your new government deliver on its commitments.

The independent research identifies that we need to reform the way we manage our farm based natural resources, and presents the best evidence yet for how much investment is needed, and how it needs to be spent, to meet the 'scale of environmental need'.

The analysis shows an annual investment of up to £5.9 billion will be required for at least the next ten years, demonstrating a costed pathway to deliver the UK's legally binding nature and climate targets on land, and ultimately secure the future of British farming.

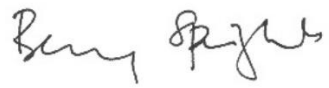
The cost of inaction is high. The extreme weather events of recent years provide a warning of the economic impacts if we fail to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Investing now in critical natural infrastructure, such as natural flood defences and carbon sequestering habitats, will help to avoid costs related to flooding and droughts, river clean up, and soil restoration.

The current £3.5 billion UK agriculture budget is therefore insufficient to cover the critical investment required. Whilst increased government investment will be essential, private finance, and further policy levers such as a raised regulatory baseline have a vital role to play.

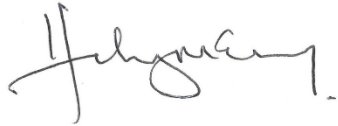
The new Westminster Government will face significant pressures on public finances, but properly investing in action to restore nature and combat climate change must be seen as a critical investment. This investment, led by government, would reinvigorate nature-depleted rural communities and support the generation of vibrant and nature-rich local economies. New employment opportunities, from agroforestry and natural capital advice to new local marketing, could create 10,000 jobs in the short-term and a further 15,000 in the long-term.

We would like to present this to your teams to discuss what our research has uncovered and, with the Nature-Friendly Farming Network, look at how we can partner with government and industry to deliver the key goals of nature's recovery, climate action and a thriving farming sector delivering healthy and sustainable produced food.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Beccy Speight'.

Beccy Speight, RSPB

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hilary McGrady'.

Hilary McGrady, National Trust

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig Bennett'.

Craig Bennett, The Wildlife Trusts

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martin Lines'.

Martin Lines, Nature Friendly Farming Network