

Rebecca Pow MP  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Nature)  
Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

*Sent by email*

5 April 2024

Dear Minister,

**Re: Protected Landscapes regulations and guidance**

Thank you for the announcement of the Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework. The publication of clear environmental targets for Protected Landscapes will help intensify actions for nature and climate across National Parks and National Landscapes.

We are writing to ask you to expedite the next pieces in the puzzle: regulations to tie Protected Landscape management plans to the Environment Act targets and to *'require relevant authorities to help develop and implement management plans for Protected Landscapes'* and guidance on how the strengthened duties should be implemented.

The targets in the Outcomes Framework are non-statutory and wide-ranging. Secondary legislation, under section 245(8) of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, committed to by Government during the passage of the Act, would provide additional rigour by ensuring that Protected Landscape Management Plans contribute to meeting targets under Part 1 of the Environment Act 2021 and that relevant public bodies collaborate on delivery. Guidance on the strengthened duty under section 245(7) of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 to seek to further the Protected Landscapes' statutory purposes would support relevant authorities in implementing the new duty. It will be vital that this guidance reflects the intent of Parliament to drive a step change in delivery in Protected Landscapes. Clear regulations and guidance would help ensure that Protected Landscapes and other relevant authorities deliver the Outcomes Framework successfully and make a significant contribution to Environment Act targets.

We understand that Defra remains committed to introducing these regulations and guidance, but that the timescale for introduction has not been established. Given the urgent need for regulations to maximise the outputs of Outcomes Framework activities, and the fact that the first target in the Environment Act falls in 2030, delay would really hamper efforts to improve Protected Landscapes.

We urge you to accelerate this process and to swiftly introduce guidance and secondary legislation before Summer Recess that will require and support relevant authorities to seek to further the statutory purposes and help develop and implement management plans for Protected Landscapes.

Thank you for your consideration of these matters and congratulations again to you and your team for the progress on the Outcomes Framework. The guidance and regulations will bolster and cement this progress.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Foster, Conservation Director, Amphibian and Reptile Conservation

Gill Perkins, CEO, Bumblebee Conservation Trust

Rose O'Neill, CEO, Campaign for National Parks

Sally Hayns, CEO, Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management

Roger Mortlock, Chief Executive, CPRE – the Countryside Charity

David Bunt, CEO, Institute for Fisheries Management

Kate Ashbrook, General Secretary, Open Spaces Society

Ian Dunn, CEO, Plantlife

Kevin Cumming, Director, Rewilding Britain

Michael Copleston, England Director, RSPB

Sue Sayer, Director, Seal Research Trust

Joan Edwards OBE, Director Policy and Public Affairs, The Wildlife Trusts

Dr Richard Benwell, CEO, Wildlife and Countryside Link

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