

27th September 2019

Dear Secretary of State,

In these testing and volatile times, little is more important than tackling the global climate and nature crises and securing the nation's long-term health and wellbeing.

The RSA's Food, Farming and Countryside Commission reports, published in July, offer a bold and ambitious, yet realistic and optimistic version of a future which does both. They underscore the clear connections between farming and environmental stewardship; healthy, affordable food and the public's health and wellbeing; flourishing rural economies and thriving communities. We are delighted to support their ambition.

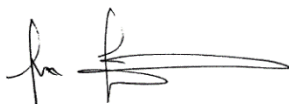
Above all, they're a call to action – to governments, businesses and to civic society – and for joined up, resolute leadership for the radical and practical steps needed. The Commission's 15 recommendations include reversing the decline in the nation's health and wellbeing with more support for healthy, affordable food, especially British fruit, veg, nuts, fish, meat and dairy from sustainable sources; committing to a workable transition plan for climate and nature friendly farming; providing the resources needed for a just and green transition, including a National Agroecology Investment Bank.

Taken together, they add up to a programme for change on a scale commensurate with the challenges, highlighting areas where people in different sectors, walks of life and political parties can find common ground.

A pre-requisite for this progressive agenda, and all the benefits it will bring, is a level playing field in whatever trading environment follows. The risks to citizens, rural communities, food and farming businesses are immense if we rush into the wrong trade deals after Brexit. UK Governments have established their ambitions to be world leading in environmental performance; this cannot be achieved by offshoring our responsibilities to countries who have less capacity, fewer resources or lower standards than we do.

The Commission has described a compelling future, which we all want to help happen. Its work was showcased at the UN Climate Action Summit in New York. Let's not undermine this opportunity to demonstrate strong UK leadership to invest in a more sustainable future, through pressures to do trade deals, at any cost.

Yours faithfully,



Sir Ian Cheshire

Chair, Food, Farming and Countryside Commission & Chairman, Barclays Bank UK

and,

Andrew Selley

Commissioner. Chief Executive, Bidfood

Ann Jones	Commissioner. Vice Chair, National Federation of Women's Institutes
Baroness Barbara Young	Commissioner. Member of the House of Lords and Chair, Woodland Trust
David Fursdon	Commissioner. Chair, Future of Farming Review
Prof. David Hill CBE	Commissioner. Chairman, The Environment Bank
Dr David Pencheon	Commissioner. Honorary Professor, Health and Sustainable Development, University of Exeter
Dame Fiona Reynolds	Commissioner. Master, Emmanuel College, Cambridge
Helen Browning OBE	Commissioner. Chief Executive, Soil Association
Judith Batchelar OBE	Commissioner. Director, Sainsbury's Brand
Kath Dalmeny	Commissioner. Chief Executive, Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming
Shirley Cramer CBE	Commissioner. Chief Executive, Royal Society for Public Health
Sue Pritchard	Commissioner. Director, The RSA Food, Farming and Countryside Commission
Prof. Tim Jackson	Commissioner. Director, Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity, University of Surrey
Ufi Ibrahim	Commissioner. Chairman, Hotels Energy Board
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Andrew Stephen	CEO, Sustainable Restaurant Association
Anna Taylor	Executive Director, Food Foundation
Anna van der Hurd	CEO, A-Team Foundation
Ben Goldsmith	CEO, Menhaden
Benet Northcote	Board Member, Conservative Environment Network
Bevis Watts	CEO, Triodos Bank UK
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Caroline Mason CBE	CEO, The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
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Chris Sherwood	Chief Executive, RSPCA
Christopher Price	Chief Executive, Rare Breeds Survival Trust
Christopher Stopes	Chair, English Organic Forum
Corinne Pluchino	Chief Executive, Campaign for National Parks
Craig Bennett	CEO, Friends of the Earth
Crispin Truman	Chief Executive, Campaign to Protect Rural England
Dan Crossley	Executive Director, Food Ethics Council
Dan Parker	Director, Veg Power
Prof. David Barling	Director, Centre for Agriculture, Food and Environmental Management, University of Hertfordshire
David Read	Chairman, Prestige Purchasing
Dee Woods	Food and climate justice activist
Dennis Overton OBE	Chair, Scotland Food and Drink

Lord Curry of Kirkhale	Member of the House of Lords, Chair, Food and Farming Futures
Ed Davey	Author, Given Half A Chance: Ten Ways to Save the World
Prof. Elizabeth Dowler	Professor of Food and Social Policy, University of Warwick
Ellen Fay	Executive Director, Sustainable Soils Alliance
Emma Howard-Boyd	Chair, Environment Agency
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Fiona Howie	CEO, Town and Country Planning Association
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Dr Gabriel Scally	Chair, Soil Association
George Dunn	Chief Executive, Tenant Farmers Association and TFA Cymru
Grace Yu, Sarah Butler Sloss, Claire Birch	Trustees, The Ashden Trust
Graham Biggs MBE	Chief Executive, Rural Services Network
Sir Graham Wynne	World Resources Institute Distinguished Fellow
Greg Parston	Chair, The Dartington Hall Trust
Heather Peck	Chair, Lantra
Hilary McGrady	Director General, The National Trust
Prof. Ian Bateman OBE	Professor of Environmental Economics at the Land, Environment, Economics and Policy Institute, University of Exeter
James Bielby	CEO, Federation of Wholesale Distributors
Dr Jane Davidson	Pro Vice-Chancellor for External Engagement and Sustainability, University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Prof. Janet Dwyer	Professor of Rural Policy, University of Gloucestershire
Prof. Joanna Price	Vice-Chancellor, Royal Agricultural University
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Kate Ashbrook	General Secretary, Open Spaces Society
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Lynne Stubbings	Chair, National Federation of Women's Institutes
Prof. Maggie Rae	President, Faculty of Public Health
Margaret Clark	Chair, Plunkett Foundation
Mark Sainsbury	Co-owner, The Zetter Group
Martin Lines	UK Chair, Nature Friendly Farming Network
Mat Roberts	CEO, Shetland Amenity Trust
Prof. Matt Lobley	Director, Centre for Rural Policy Research, University of Exeter
Matthew Naylor	Managing Director, Naylor Flowers and Farmers Weekly Columnist
Matthew Taylor	Chief Executive, The RSA
Prof. Michael Lee	Head of Sustainable Agricultural Sciences, Rothamsted Research

Prof. Michael Winter OBE	Professor of Land Economy and Society, University of Exeter
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Patrick Casement	Chair, Northern Ireland Environment Link
Patrick Holden CBE	Chief Executive, Sustainable Food Trust
Peter Ainsworth	Chair, The Heritage Alliance
Philip Lymbery	CEO, Compassion in World Farming
Rebecca Speight	Chief Executive, RSPB
Rob Collins	Chief Executive, Waitrose
Robin Stott	Co-chair, Climate and Health Alliance
Roger Kerr	CEO, Organic Farmers and Growers CIC
Roland Bonney	COO, Benchmark Holdings plc
Baroness Rosie Boycott	Member of the House of Lords and food campaigner
Sally Uren	Chief Executive, Forum for the Future
Shaun Spiers	CEO, Green Alliance
Simon Wright	Founder, Wright's Food Emporium
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Dr Tara Garnett	Director, Food Climate Research Network
Prof. Tim Benton	Director, Energy Environment and Resources Department, Chatham House
Tim Breitmeyer	President, Country Land and Business Association
Tim Eyles	Consultant, Taylor Wessing
Prof. Tim Lang	Professor of Food Policy, City, University of London
Sir Tim Smit KBE	CEO, Eden Project
Tom Curtis	Director, 3Keel
Prof. Tom MacMillan	Elizabeth Creak Chair in Rural Policy and Strategy, Royal Agricultural University
Tony Greenham	CEO, South West Mutual
Dr Tony Juniper CBE	Environmentalist and Chair, Natural England
Lord Victor Adebowale	Member of the House of Lords and Chief Executive, Turning Point