

To:

Anneliese Dodds MP

David Johnston MP

John Howell MP

Robert Courts MP

Victoria Prentis MP

CC: Layla Moran MP

Dear Oxfordshire MPs¹

We, the undersigned, are a group of local businesses and organisations across the six Oxfordshire constituencies (Oxford East, Wantage, Henley, Oxford West and Abingdon, Witney, Banbury) who are committed to action on the climate and ecological emergency. In order to align our businesses and organisations with a sustainable and zero carbon future, we require a strong legislative framework that embeds the Government's targets in law, enabling us to plan and develop our future trajectories to fit in with those targets.

We welcome the strides that UK policy-makers have taken over the last decade to support the decarbonisation of the UK economy and, in doing so, stimulating green growth and new jobs. The Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan, the heightened ambition of our Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) for COP26 and the Climate Change Committee's Sixth Carbon Budget all help provide confidence that we will maintain this momentum and associated economic opportunity through to 2030. However, there are key parts of this framework that are still missing and that the Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) Bill - a private members bill which has been proposed by a coalition of scientists, academics and lawyers - seeks to address, specifically:

1. linking action on climate and nature (the first piece of legislation to explicitly and strategically link the two);
2. taking account of our global, consumption-based emissions; and
3. supporting citizen assemblies to engage people in the need for, practicality of, and benefits of decarbonisation.

The Bill aims to plug these gaps and to bring the UK's climate policy into line with evolving scientific advice; it will commit us to the emissions reductions necessary to keep global temperature rise (currently at 1.2°C) below 1.5°C. As the 2018 report by the Intergovernmental

¹ This list of Oxfordshire MPs does not include Layla Moran MP, who has already committed to supporting the CEE Bill.

Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) made clear, every half a degree makes a world of difference: severe climate impacts with 1.5°C of warming, such as extreme weather patterns causing flooding and heat waves, get *significantly* worse with 2°C. The business case for maintaining warming to 1.5°C is clear; a 1.5°C world is a world that is more economically stable. From the supply chain to the consumer, every part of a company's value chain will benefit from limiting warming to 1.5°C. If we do not hold temperature rise to 1.5°C to mitigate against some of the worst climate impacts, we face irreversible damage to our societies, economies and the natural world.

The CEE Bill commits the UK to the protection and active restoration of degraded ecosystems, the active management of carbon sinks, and a comprehensive set of metrics to assess progress. And importantly, the Bill ensures that we fairly account for the UK's entire carbon footprint, by including shipping, aviation and emissions embodied as carbon in imported products, all currently excluded. Because behaviour change is required to tackle the climate and ecological crisis, it is essential that people are involved in decisions that impact them. The Bill proposes citizens' assemblies as a tried and tested route to engaging citizens in the democratic process in a way that effectively mandates and empowers politicians to arrive at recommendations that will address challenging decisions.

The CEE Bill has already gained, at the time of writing in February 2021, the support of 98 MPs and a range of businesses and campaign groups (for example the Sustain Alliance, Save British Farming, Business Declares and Triodos Bank). It goes above and beyond existing and currently proposed legislation such as the Environment Bill, in that it will set binding targets and budgets that will give our businesses and organisations the certainty to act. In contrast, the Government's proposed Environment Bill only sets long-term targets of 15 years, with no binding interim targets for improving air and water quality, biodiversity, resource efficiency and waste reduction, and it does not include any greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets. Another initiative, the Ten Point Plan, sets out the Government's vision and some welcome investment, but does not provide binding targets or a detailed plan for achieving the emissions cuts we need to keep global warming below 1.5°C.

This year, the attention of the world will be on the UK as we host both the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) and the G7 summit. These will be an opportunity to offer an ambitious policy framework and to present the UK as forward thinking and going above and beyond the policy framework we currently have in place, which is widely regarded by scientists as inadequate for meeting our climate targets. We have the opportunity to be the first nation to fully embrace this expert advice, establishing ourselves as a global leader, and providing the certainty that British businesses need to innovate and invest.

We ask you therefore to support the CEE Bill, and to recognise that there is a wide, growing and diverse group of businesses and organisations in your constituencies calling on the Government to take leadership by setting binding commitments in law on tackling the climate and ecological emergency.

Yours sincerely