

Roseanna Cunningham MSP
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Dear Cabinet Secretary,

As Species Champions for a range of Scottish species, we call on you to champion nature.

In May 2019, the First Minister declared both a climate and nature emergency. The world faces an unprecedented threat to nature with extinctions, a serious loss of species abundance and distribution, and habitat loss and ecosystems in decline. In 2019, the [State of Nature report](#) found that 49% of UK species have declined as well as 1 in 9 species at risk of national extinction. We need a strategic approach to protect our environment and ensure that our nature is healthy and thriving for future generations. Without support and investment, nature cannot continue to provide the wellbeing and livelihoods we depend on.

The UN's [Global Biodiversity Outlook report](#) published in September outlined how we have failed to take enough action to turn the tide of biodiversity loss in the last decade. According to the UK Government's own assessment of performance the UK has also failed in its contribution towards this global goal. The world collectively failed to meet the Aichi Biodiversity Targets set in 2010. These targets make it clear that while the last UN decade on biodiversity has failed, this coming decade on ecosystem restoration cannot.

Scottish Environment LINK's report [Putting Scotland on a Path to Recovery](#) shares a vision on how targets have driven improvements in other sectors, including Scottish health and education, as well as enabling other countries from New Zealand to the Netherlands to improve their environment. Scotland can be a world leader on nature recovery, but we need to evidence our progress. Nature recovery targets provide a means of doing this. Targeted action to recover species and habitats can also have significant benefits for tackling the climate crisis, by providing nature-based solutions to climate change.

We are calling on the Scottish Government to champion nature. Ecosystems and key habitats such as forests, peatlands, permanent grasslands as well as freshwater, coastal and marine habitats are all hotspots for biodiversity. Scotland has 31% of the UK's land, 59% of the UK's coastline and 61% of the UK's seas. Whether these wild places not only survive, but thrive, is dependent on policy and legislation made by the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government.

As advocates for wildlife we urge the Scottish Government to recognise their part in the lost decade for nature and take action to change laws and provide investment to halt nature loss and climate change.

Yours sincerely,

Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP, Species Champion for Rusty-Bog-Moss

Alex Rowley MSP, Species Champion for Narrow Headed Ant
Alexander Burnett MSP, Species Champion for Freshwater Pearl Mussel
Alison Johnstone MSP, Species Champion for Brown Hare
Beatrice Wishart MSP, Species Champion for Orca
Claire Baker MSP, Species Champion for Puffin
Claudia Beamish MSP, Species Champion for Forester Moth
Colin Smyth MSP, Species Champion for Badger
David Stewart MSP, Species Champion for Great Yellow Bumblebee
Donald Cameron MSP, Species Champion for Merlin
Graham Simpson MSP, Species Champion for Bilberry Bumblebee and Holly
Iain Gray MSP, Species Champion for Short Eared Owl
Jackie Baillie MSP, Species Champion for Smooth Newt
James Kelly MSP, Species Champion for Brown Long Eared Bat
Jeremy Balfour MSP, Species Champion for Swift
Johann Lamont MSP, Species Champion for Lapwing
John Finnie MSP, Species Champion for Beaver and Aspen
John Scott MSP, Species Champion for Grayling Butterfly
Lewis Macdonald MSP, Species Champion for Curlew
Liam McArthur MSP, Species Champion for Scottish Primrose
Mark Ruskell MSP, Species Champion for White Tailed Eagle
Maurice Golden MSP, Species Champion for Arran Whitebeam
Michelle Ballantyne MSP, Species Champion for Atlantic Salmon
Miles Briggs MSP, Species Champion for Water Vole
Monica Lennon MSP, Species Champion for Oak
Neil Bibby MSP, Species Champion for Risso's Dolphin
Neil Findlay MSP, Species Champion for Noctule Bat
Patrick Harvie MSP, Species Champion for Red Mason Bee
Pauline McNeill MSP, Species Champion for Sea Trout
Sarah Boyack MSP, Species Champion for Small Skipper



Scottish Environment LINK the voice for Scotland's environment



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