

Rt Hon Liz Truss
Secretary of State for International Trade
Department for International Trade
Old Admiralty Building
Admiralty Place
Whitehall
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8 June 2021

Dear Secretary of State,

As the UK prepares to sign a trade agreement in principle with Australia, we are writing to reiterate our concern that unsustainable agricultural practices in Australia are driving deforestation, nature loss, and climate change. The country ranks 54th of the 60 largest emitters in efforts to tackle climate change, while also having the highest rate of deforestation in the OECD.

Unsustainable agricultural practices should not be rewarded with unfettered access to the UK market. The UK is a nation that values food produced to high animal welfare, and environmental standards. Consumers expect that food in restaurants or on supermarket shelves is produced to ways that meet those values. Offering tariff and quota-free trade to Australia in the UK's first major trade deal would run directly counter to these demands, increasing rather than mitigating our global footprint.

The Trade and Agriculture Commission recommended developing a set of minimum standards for all imports to the UK, to safeguard our core standards and ensure all our food meets the public's expectations. The government should respond to those recommendations as a matter of urgency to create a system that promotes fair, rules-based competition that limits the risk of environmental harm and builds a farming sector fit for the future.

The UK government is taking positive steps to shift agricultural practices toward more sustainable farming models at home and is leading the world at COP26 to encourage more countries to use agricultural subsidies to pay public money for public goods. Likewise, our trade relationships should be making the UK a stronger and more resilient, greener nation, not aligning with laggards on climate, nature and animal welfare, or making our farmers compete with old models of farming we want to move away from.

We welcome fair competition with Australian producers who share the UK's values and meet our standards. The government have been clear they will not remove existing standards for products such as chlorine-washed chicken or hormone-

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treated beef, but there is not the same clarity on environmental and animal welfare protections. There are currently no protections to address the difference in environmental and animal welfare regulatory baselines between our two countries and we need them if we are to incentivise higher standards globally.

The 'core standards' approach outlined above is a key opportunity for the UK to use our global leadership to create a market for high standard imports from Australia, and other countries we strike deals with, using our independent trading status to create demand for the sustainable agricultural practices we want and need to see around the world.

We urge you to take the time and make the right deal for people and planet.

Yours sincerely,

Shaun Spiers, Executive Director, Green Alliance Tanya Steele, CEO, WWF

Jon Parker, CEO, Campaign for the Protection for Rural Wales

James Thornton, CEO, Client Earth

Philip Lymbery, CEO, Compassion in World Farming

Hugh Knowles and Miriam Turner, co-CEOs, Friends of the Earth

John Sauven, Executive Director, Greenpeace

Hilary McGrady, Director-General, National Trust

Craig McGuicken, CEO, Northern Ireland Environment Link

Beccy Speight, CEO, RSPB

Chris Sherwood, CEO, RSPCA

Deborah Long, Chief Officer, Scottish Environment Link

Kath Dalmeny, Chief Executive, Sustain

Craig Bennett, CEO, The Wildlife Trusts

Karen Whitfield, Joint Director, Wales Environment Link

Richard Benwell, CEO, Wildlife and Countryside Link

James Robinson, Director of Conservation, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust

Darren Moorcroft, CEO, Woodland Trust