

Trudy Harrison MP  
Minister for Natural Environment and Land Use  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
Seacole Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

12th May 2023

**Re: National Adaptation Programme and the urgency to adapt**

Dear Minister,

Climate change has arrived in the UK, but the country is 'strikingly unprepared'. These are the words of the Government's own climate advisors warning that we are now at a [make-or-break moment](#) for climate change adaptation. The Government cannot waste this opportunity and risk another 'lost decade' of action.

In recent years, we have seen record breaking temperatures, including the first 40°C day in 2022, as well as widespread drought, record numbers of wildfires and higher than average sea levels. This is leading to huge impacts on public health, nature, infrastructure and the economy, and the impacts will continue to worsen if we are not prepared.

In England, the previous National Adaptation Programmes failed to prepare us for the changes in climate we are now seeing. However, the Government has a final chance to turn things around this decade through the upcoming third National Adaptation Programme (2023-2028). The actions taken now will fundamentally affect how well we can adapt to a changing climate in the years to come.

We need:

- Nature to be at the heart of the UK's adaptation response, recognising its [critical and cost-effective role](#) in helping us adapt whilst delivering multiple co-benefits.
- Communities to be empowered and supported to adapt at a local level.
- Ambitious and robust adaptation targets that can be measured and monitored.
- All parts of Government to be involved and collectively responsible, and engaged with the devolved nations, to ensure a coordinated response across the UK.
- Consideration taken for levels of warming [beyond 1.5°C to fully prepare](#) for a range of scenarios.

The Government must not miss this critical chance to secure our futures and tackle the nature and climate emergency. Without a comprehensive, ambitious and well-resourced National

Adaptation Plan, climate change impacts in the UK will get progressively worse and it will be harder to manage future risks. We must act now.

Yours sincerely,

Katie-Jo Luxton, Executive Director, Global Conservation, RSPB

Professor Nathalie Seddon, Director, Nature-based Solutions Initiative, University of Oxford

Richard Benwell, Chief Executive Officer, Wildlife and Countryside Link

Kathryn Brown, Director of Climate Change and Evidence, The Wildlife Trusts

Patrick Begg, Outdoors and Natural Resources Director, National Trust

James Robinson, Conservation Director, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust

Darren Moorcroft, Chief Executive Officer, Woodland Trust

Bronwen Smith-Thomas, Interim Co-Director, The Climate Coalition

Nicola Hutchinson, Director of Conservation, Plantlife

Angela Francis, Director of Policy Solutions, WWF