

Written evidence from Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (PAE0024)



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP

Secretary of State for Levelling up Housing & Communities

Minister for Intergovernmental Relations

2 Marsham Street

London

SW1P 4DF

The Baroness Parminter
Chair, Environment and Climate Change
Committee
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

9 May 2023

Dear Baroness, Parminter,

Environment and Climate Change Inquiry

I am writing further to your Committee's request for my Department to provide written evidence on the Environment and Climate Change inquiry. Although the policy lead on the items raised is Defra, we are very supportive of the policy aims and are integrating into our own policy areas where appropriate to do so. In response to the specific questions asked, please see my response below.

What does DLUHC see to be its role in contributing to the Government's commitment to protect 30% of land and sea by 2030?

DLUHC does not have a formal role in directly contributing to the protection of 30% of land and sea by 2030, but as the department responsible for setting national policy on land use planning, there are various policy levers we can use to support Government in achieving this commitment. Through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), we set national policy to conserve and enhance the natural environment. This includes national policy to retain rigorous protection for National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In addition to existing national planning policy, we are working closely with Defra as policies and regulations on Biodiversity Net Gain and Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRs) to ensure they are effectively integrated into planning processes.

Of the current and planned policies owned by DLUHC or which the department has some involvement in, which do you see to be key mechanisms for contributing to '30 by 30', and how will this contribution be realised?

The mechanisms discussed above are the key ones for us contributing to '30 by 30'. The NPPF already expects local plans to identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks. In addition, LNRs are designed to work with the planning system by supporting the development of Local Plans and decision-making for mandatory biodiversity net gain.

What plans does DLUHC have to support coordination between HM Government and local authorities regarding '30 by 30'?

DLUHC stands ready to contribute to Defra's work leading on this issue. Specifically, DLUHC and Defra are working together to develop guidance specifically for local planning authorities (LPAs) on how LNRs align with the planning system. We've proposed a joint roundtable with the UK's largest landowners, and will be happy to assist Defra in consulting local authorities on this.

I trust you find this information helpful.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Gove". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities
Minister for Intergovernmental Relations