

The Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer KCB KC MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London  
SW1A 2AA

24 July 2025

Dear Prime Minister,

**Biodiversity Net Gain could be a cornerstone for a thriving economy, with the right support and direction**

We write as a group of businesses and organisations who are united in strong support for the UK's global leadership on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). Our collective voice sends a clear message: weakening BNG would come at a high cost, setting back this fast-developing economy and more widely threatening business confidence in nature policy.

The Treasury-commissioned *Dasgupta Review* made clear that nature and the economy are fundamentally linked. It called for a new economic approach that recognises the essential role of nature in sustaining long-term growth.

BNG is a critical part of this new economic approach. This world-leading policy has established a consistent way of measuring improvements to wildlife habitats in association with development. A new green market is growing, creating jobs and upping investment in rural and coastal areas, furthering the Government's growth mission. The burgeoning marketplace is starting to show its full value: ever more sites are being added to the BNG sites register, now standing at 97 across England with many more in the pipeline.

We fear the proposed changes to BNG, which are under consultation, threaten to undermine this progress by weakening requirements for minor and medium-sized developments. To date, these developments have been a main driver of demand in the developing market, with the majority of the number of allocations (around 80%) from the Biodiversity Gain Site Register to minor development. A recent study conducted by Eftec, commissioned by Lifescapes and Wildlife and Countryside Link, found that if developments up to and including 1ha are exempted from the BNG requirement, 24,220 ha of extra developed land will fall outside the BNG requirement and lead to avoided BNG compensation payments of a possible £250m/year. The full findings of this study can be found [HERE](#).

While local solutions aren't always available for minor and medium developments yet, removing this demand will stifle the marketplace and neglect the vast potential of these

developments to contribute to nature's recovery. Instead of permanent changes and exemptions, temporary solutions, such as supporting SMEs to access offsite BNG units, could create conditions in which the marketplace can further flourish and become fully functioning.

Although BNG is not yet perfect, it is a solid foundation on which to build a strengthening and improving market that delivers for nature, business, and communities alike.

According to the Green Finance Institute, [nature-related risks could result in losses of £150 to £300 billion to the UK's GDP by 2030](#). Addressing this scale of risk will require innovative, blended finance approaches, of which BNG forms part. In the Nature Markets Framework, Government [set a goal for at least £500 million](#) of private investment to flow into nature recovery every year by 2027, rising to more than £1 billion by 2030.

Despite this, the proposed relaxation of the BNG requirements, at just the moment that the sector has got itself geared up and ready to implement them, creates significant uncertainty in a nascent market that depends on long-term commitments and private investment. Long-term stability is vital to ensure consistent demand and supply and maintain investor confidence in nature markets.

Businesses understand the need to invest in nature. Many are advancing sustainability commitments, and actively seeking to support nature-positive outcomes aligned with the Global Biodiversity Framework. They recognise that restoring biodiversity is essential not only for environmental reasons, but also for economic stability and resilience.

As the UK faces urgent environmental and economic challenges, there is a unique opportunity to lead by example. Weakening BNG at this pivotal moment would be a step backwards, particularly as the Government seeks to expand private investment in nature recovery, as highlighted in its recent call for evidence.

Instead, we urge the Government to stay the course, strengthen implementation, and build on this policy's early success. The chronic under resourcing of council planning departments must be addressed to improve the pace of the planning system and deliver on the ambition required to see the natural world thrive alongside development across the UK. With the right support and direction, BNG can be a cornerstone of a thriving nature economy - and a lasting legacy of environmental leadership.

Yours sincerely,

Roland Bull, Head of Rural, Bidwells

Andy Jasper, CEO, Eden Project

Guy Thompson, Managing Director, EnTrade

Catherine Spitzer, CEO, Environment Bank

Richard Speak, Co-Founder and Managing Director, Finance Earth

Zoe Le Grand, Managing Director UK/EU Team, Forum for the Future

Alistair Maltby, SVP Commercial, Great Yellow

Morgan Taylor, Director, Greengage Environmental  
James Farrell, Proprietary Partner, Head of Rural Consultancy, Knight Frank LLP  
Hilary McGrady, Director General, National Trust  
Archie Struthers, CEO, Nattergal  
Dr Rich Stockdale, CEO, Oxygen Conservation  
Jane Madgwick, Chief Executive, Plantlife  
Robert Gardner, CEO and Co-Founder, Rebalance Earth  
James Vaccaro, CEO, Repattern  
Jon Davies FCIEEM, Director, RSK Wilding and RSK Biocensus  
Beccy Speight, Chief Executive Officer, RSPB  
Oliver Gregson, CEO, Schroders Wealth Management  
Anna Woodley, Managing Director, Trinity Natural Capital Group Ltd  
Mark Clayton, CEO, Triodos Bank UK  
Ben Heaven Taylor, CEO, Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment  
Cressida Curtis, Group Sustainability Director, Wates Group  
Glenn Anderson, Strategy Lead, Wendling Beck  
Richard Benwell, Chief Executive, Wildlife & Countryside Link  
Anita Eade, Director of Fundraising, Marketing & Communications, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust  
Craig Bennett, Chief Executive, The Wildlife Trusts  
Abi Bunker, Director of Conservation and External Affairs, The Woodland Trust

CC

The Rt Hon Rachel Reeves MP;  
The Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP;  
The Rt Hon Steve Reed OBE MP