

Greens denounce Ministers' pandering to industry lobbyists on plastic pollution

18 February 2017

Keith Taylor MEP: 'These latest revelations expose the Government's shameful decision to kowtow to industry lobbyists and roll back important recycling progress.'

Keith Taylor, Green MEP for the South East, has issued a stinging criticism of government Ministers as documents reveal the [influence of plastics industry lobbying](#) on the decision to cut UK recycling targets. The revelations come as the latest 'Great Winter Nurdle Hunt' uncovers [widespread plastic pollution](#) on Britain's beaches.

The UK government quietly reduced recycling targets for plastic waste last year, after dozens of lobby groups and plastic producers pushed for lower rates, according to documents obtained by Energydesk.

Energydesk obtained 62 of the 63 responses to a government consultation on recycling targets.

The majority of respondents to the consultation were plastic producers or industry groups. Of those, all pushed for a reduction in the targets.

Keith, a member of the European Parliament's Environment Committee, said:

"Plastic pollution is choking our oceans and our beaches, but the documents obtained this week demonstrate the UK Government appears more concerned with protecting the profit margins of multinational corporations and industry lobbyists than safeguarding Britain's natural environment."

"It is extremely concerning that almost three-quarters of UK beaches are blighted by the raw materials of the plastic industry. These plastic pellets pose a significant threat to our precious wildlife and damage the health of our oceans and seas."

"These latest revelations expose the Government's shameful decision to kowtow to industry lobbyists and roll back important recycling progress. Far from being a party working for the many, the Conservatives prove, once again, they are the party of powerful and privileged vested interests."

"We cannot let the Government use the EU referendum as an excuse further water down essential recycling targets. The [EU Circular Economy Package](#) sets an ambitious and common EU-wide target for recycling 75% of packaging waste by 2030. Ministers must make a firm commitment to maintaining and implementing these ambitious targets post-Brexit."

"Plastic pollution does not respect borders nor national sovereignty. For the sake of the health of our oceans and our beaches, to protect our precious environment and our beloved wildlife, Theresa May must also commit to maintaining a close relationship with our European neighbours to combat the problem."

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