

House of Lords Committee report echoes Green concerns on protecting environment post-Brexit



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Greens have reasserted demands for an Environmental Protection Act in the wake of a new House of Lords Select Committee report on the impact of Brexit on the environment and tackling climate change [1].

The report says the importance of the role of EU institutions in ensuring effective enforcement of environmental protection and standards 'cannot be over-stated' and warns the government that it faces 'a considerable challenge in maintaining environmental legislation through the Great Repeal Bill [2].'

The report also raises concerns about the watering down of the UK's international commitments on, for example, climate change. The committee calls on the government to clarify whether and how EU funding for environmental measures will be replaced by domestic funds post-Brexit.

The concerns and recommendations from the House of Lords committee echo the 'cocktail of risks' to the environment highlighted by Green Party MP, Caroline Lucas, in a report she launched earlier this week [3]. In the report, she calls for a new 'Environmental Protection Act' to ensure that environmental protections will not be lost, watered-down, or ignored.

Keith Taylor, Green MEP for the South East, said:

"This report reaffirms what we have long suspected: the government is largely unprepared for and, worse still, uninterested in dealing with the peril Theresa May's plan to pursue an extreme Brexit would leave Britain's environment in.

"Ministers confirmed just this week that since the EU referendum almost eight months ago, there has been no research into the environmental impacts of Brexit nor has there been any research commissioned to help develop environmental policy post-Brexit. Yet the Conservatives made a manifesto promise to be "the first generation to leave the environment in a better state than we found it". We must hold them to account and start work immediately on ensuring vital EU environmental protections are made legally binding and enforceable in the UK post-Brexit."

Jean Lambert, Green MEP for London, said:

"It's no accident that environmental standards and legislation are some of the most important features of the European Union. The impacts of climate change, pollution and resource depletion don't stop at national borders. When it comes to the environment countries need to work together. But the UK

Government's go-it-alone Brexit mantra risks throwing away important environmental protections. If the Government truly wants to protect the UK's environment it will act to enshrine EU environmental laws in an Environmental Protection Act for the UK."

Molly Scott Cato, Green MEP for the South West, said:

"It is clear how much British environmentalists rely both on EU law and EU courts to prevent damage to our special places, wildlife, water and beaches. Outside the EU we need to strengthen our domestic protections which is why we need a specific law and a court to enforce it."

Notes

[1]

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/lords-select/eu-energy-environment-subcommittee/news-parliament-2015/brexit-env-cc-rpt/>

[2] <http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/CBP-7793>

[3]

<https://www.carolinelucas.com/sites/carolinelucas.com/files/Safe%20Guarding%20Environment%20after%20Brexit.pdf>

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