

Trade Bill – Green win protects current standards



20 March 2019

The government are due to amend the Trade Bill today to protect existing standards for animal welfare, workers rights and the environment in future trade agreements. They have submitted a slightly tweaked version of the [amendment](#) put forward by Green Party Baroness Jones.

Jenny Jones' amendment on the Trade Bill was debated two weeks ago and she received a lot of cross party support from Labour. She has also [met](#) the Minister to discuss it. It contains the current protections for the standards we have. But the Government had seemed reluctant to accept it, even though the Prime Minister had committed herself to not weakening existing standards in future trade agreements. At the moment it would be possible for Ministers to use statutory instruments to change the rules on this, but this amendment would guarantee these minimum standards were kept for rolling over all the trade deals that we currently have as a result of EU membership.

It's a crucial political decision as the right wing freemarket types in the conservative party didn't want their hands tied.

[Amendment](#) by Government Minister of State, Baroness Fairhead:

Page 2, line 22, leave out "(4)" and insert "(4A)"

Page 2, line 43, at end insert–

"(4A) If regulations under subsection (1) include provision in any of the areas listed

in subsection (4B), the provision must be consistent with maintaining UK levels of statutory protection in that area.

(4B) The areas referred to in subsection (4A) are–

- (a) the protection of human, animal or plant life or health;
- (b) animal welfare;
- (c) environmental protection;
- (d) employment and labour.

(4C) “UK levels of statutory protection” means levels of protection provided for by
or under any—
(a) primary legislation,
(b) subordinate legislation, or
(c) retained direct EU legislation,
which has effect in the United Kingdom, or the part of the United Kingdom in which the regulations have effect, on the date on which a draft of the regulations is laid.”

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