



Scottish  
Environment  
LINK

Dolphin House  
4 Hunter Square  
Edinburgh  
EH1 1QW

T: 0131 225 4345  
E: [information@scotlink.org](mailto:information@scotlink.org)  
W: [www.scotlink.org](http://www.scotlink.org)

9 May 2024

**John Swinney MSP**  
**First Minister**  
**Scottish Government**

Dear First Minister,

On behalf of Scottish Environment LINK, we would like to extend our congratulations to you on your election as First Minister. Scottish Environment LINK is the forum for Scotland's voluntary environment community, with over 40 member bodies representing a broad spectrum of environmental interests with the common goal of contributing to a more environmentally sustainable society.

We are in a nature emergency. Scotland has suffered a high historic level of nature loss, and in the context of climate change we face even greater risks today. We have lost more of our natural biodiversity than the majority of other countries, and today average species abundance and distribution continue to decline, with [1 in 9 species at risk of national extinction](#). The recovery of nature is essential to safeguard the future of our societies and economies, as well as of wildlife itself. As a network of environmental organisations, we believe that there is a fundamental and moral imperative to save nature and the diverse ecosystems that support all life.

LINK members are strongly committed to the introduction of a Natural Environment Bill by the end of 2024. This Bill will include key legal changes to support the recovery of nature including through setting nature restoration targets. This has the potential to accelerate the pace and scale of our efforts to halt the loss of biodiversity on land and at sea by measuring progress towards that goal. Environmental recovery is enormously popular with the Scottish public and is essential to support our wider economy, and in particular the rural businesses, including agriculture, that are most dependent on nature for their resilience and survival.

We are grateful for your support over the past year as a Nature Champion for Atlantic salmon. We hope that you continue to be a champion for Scotland's natural environment in your new position as First Minister. We would be delighted to offer you the opportunity to undertake a site visit over the coming months to discuss the enormous potential in Scotland's natural environment. More broadly, we are always happy to speak to you and your Ministers as we take forward our shared priorities.

Yours sincerely,

Deborah Long

Chief Officer  
Scottish Environment LINK



Scottish Environment LINK the voice for Scotland's environment

Registered office: 5 Atholl Place, Perth, PH1 5NE. A Scottish Charity No. SC000296

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