



28 July 2026

To: Andy Burnham MP, Prime Minister

CC: Ed Miliband, Foreign Secretary

CC: Dame Angela Eagle, DBE MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

CC: Miatta Fahnbulleh MP, Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero

CC: Kirsty McNeill MP, Minister for International Development and Africa

Dear Prime Minister,

Ending global deforestation

We are writing on behalf of the NGO Forest Coalition, a coalition of UK NGOs working to end global deforestation, to congratulate you on becoming Prime Minister. The UK is a global leader in efforts to protect tropical forests and uphold the rights of forest peoples, and we look to you to sustain and strengthen this leadership in the years ahead. As the architect of the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests, endorsed by more than 130 countries, the UK has committed to halting and reversing forest loss and land degradation by 2030.

With the clock ticking, we look to you to provide leadership on the following in support of ending global deforestation:

- Restoring the UK's International Climate Finance to previous levels and increasing direct financing for Indigenous Peoples and local communities in line with the Forest and Land Tenure Pledge made at COP30¹.
- Implementing with urgency the government's 23 June [announcement on the UK's approach to deforestation regulations](#).

Action to end global deforestation is urgent because:

Global deforestation poses a national security threat. Deforestation-driven biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse are high-level threats to UK national security according to the

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cop26-world-leaders-summit-on-action-on-forests-and-land-use-2-november-2021/world-leaders-summit-on-action-on-forests-and-land-use>

government's own national security assessment report².

UK businesses are calling for robust forest risk commodity regulations and close alignment with the EU Deforestation Regulation, saying that a clear policy environment is good for business. The UK Cocoa Coalition and the Retail Soy Group have called for the UK government to adopt forest risk commodity legislation because the delay is causing market confusion³.

Financial institutions want to see an end to global deforestation, recognising that it poses a material risk. They want to see supply chain regulation⁴ and have called for mandatory financial due diligence to end the financing of deforestation⁵.

Nature loss is bad for economic growth. Nature loss - including deforestation - could cause a 12% hit to the country's GDP – larger than the impact of the global financial crisis or Covid-19. Around half of UK nature-related risks come from overseas, through supply chains and financial exposures⁶.

Since the Environment Act was passed in 2021, more than 54,000 hectares of forest have been destroyed to produce goods imported to the UK⁷. The impacts extend far beyond the loss of trees, threatening the rights, territories and livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and local communities who depend on these forests and play a vital role in protecting them.

Ending deforestation is a key part of tackling climate change - deforestation contributes 11% of global carbon emissions, surpassing those from aviation and cement production⁸. Furthermore, when we lose forests, we lose a key means of restoring climate stability for future generations.

Public support for action is strong. Polling in October 2025 by More in Common for Global Witness and WWF-UK found that 76% of Britons support the UK's commitment to end deforestation by 2030, including a majority of Reform voters⁹.

As we await the publication of the Responsible Business Conduct review we also call for new legislation in the form of a Business, Human Rights and Environment Act (BHREA): mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence legislation that requires all businesses, financial institutions, and the public sector to address and prevent

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/696e0eae719d837d69afc7de/National_security_assessment_-_global_biodiversity_loss__ecosystem_collapse_and_national_security.pdf

³ <https://ngoforestcoalition.org/2026/03/25/chocolate-businesses-and-uk-retailers-call-for-the-uk-government-to-regulate-on-forest-risk-commodities/>
https://www.retailsoygroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/240725_Letter-to-Steve-Reed.pdf

⁴ <https://ngoforestcoalition.org/2026/07/02/deforestation-regulation-welcomed-by-financial-institutions/>

⁵ <https://globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/forests/mps-should-vote-for-new-deforestation-due-diligence-law-in-financial-services-and-markets-bill/>

⁶ <https://oms-www.files.svdcn.com/production/downloads/reports/GFI-GREENING-FINANCE-FOR-NATURE-FINAL-FULL-REPORT-RDS4.pdf>

⁷ <https://globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/forests/uk-imports-linked-to-deforestation-the-size-of-leeds-since-government-delay/>

⁸ <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5804/cmselect/cmenvaud/405/summary.html>

⁹ <https://globalwitness.org/en/press-releases/strong-public-backing-for-uk-leadership-on-deforestation-as-prime-minister-heads-to-cop30/>

environmental and human rights harms in their global value chains. This would complement UK regulations on deforestation, further align the UK with EU legislation and has strong [support from UK business](#).

Ending deforestation is good for the UK's national security and good for business, biodiversity, climate and human rights. We look forward to working with you to achieve this.

Yours faithfully on behalf of the undersigned,

Signatories:

Matthew Owen, Director, Cool Earth

Rubens Carvalho, Deputy Director, Earthsight

Faith Doherty, Forest Programme Lead, Environmental Investigation Agency

Julia Christian, Co-Campaigns Coordinator, Fern

Asad Rehman, Chief Executive, Friends of the Earth England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Helen Bellfield, Deputy Executive Director, Global Canopy

Alex Reid, Deputy Director of Campaigns, Global Witness

Gemma Hoskins, Global Climate Director, Mighty Earth

Joe Eisen, Executive, Rainforest Foundation UK

Gavin Crowden - Director of Advocacy WWF UK