

Dear Colleagues,

## 2020-4 Environment & Animal Welfare

We continue to live through peculiar times. Even if we ourselves remain healthy, most of us will know people who have had coronavirus—including CPF Group Coordinators and members—and, sadly, many of us know people who would otherwise almost certainly have still been alive today, were it not for the direct and indirect effects of the pandemic and the public lockdown.

Thank you to everybody who participated in our consultation on COVID-19. Given how swiftly events were changing, whereas we usually collate your submissions to CPF discussions into a single report after the deadline has passed, we submitted weekly reports throughout the lockdown to policymakers in the Party and the Government. Your input was very much appreciated and, as so often, helped us to raise awareness of issues before they became wider public or media concerns.

Back in January, we began this parliamentary session by considering the Government's programme for legislation, as presented in the Queen's Speech. This consultation paper explores one of its major sections—namely, the environment and animal welfare.

These are issues that are of **particular interest to younger citizens**. So, if your CPF group tends mainly to attract older members, please use the opportunity to engage a more diverse range of voters this time: your discussions will be all the more informed and interesting for it.

If your local CPF Group hasn't yet tried **meeting online** via video-conference software, like Zoom, let other groups' experience encourage you to give it a try:

*"Zoom forums actually work – much to everyone's surprise!"  
(Shrewsbury & Atcham CPF)*

*"This was our first meeting on Zoom (we usually meet in a side room of a convivial local pub). It went very well – better than we expected. Everyone spoke up and our discussion was lively." (Bexhill & Battle CPF)*

Please send your responses to the questions to [CPF.Papers@conservatives.com](mailto:CPF.Papers@conservatives.com), using the associated response form published alongside this paper on the CPF website. The deadline for submitting your response is 12th July. We aim to publish our next discussion paper on 13th July, on infrastructure, investment and devolution.

A summary of responses to this discussion paper will be sent to the Prime Minister's Policy Unit, Party Chairman and CPF Chairman within a month of the closing date for submissions. We look forward to hearing your ideas as, together, we continue to unleash the country's potential.

Please stay safe, everybody, and keep heeding all the latest government advice. Together, we will come through this challenging season.

**The CPF Team**

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### **The Big Picture**

*"In the UK, we have built a very special market for food based on provenance with particular attention to food safety and animal welfare standards and we will not jeopardise that through trade deals in the future."* (Secretary of State for the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, The Rt Hon George Eustice MP)

Now that we have left the European Union, we can take full responsibility for how we protect our environment and deliver on our commitment to leave it in a better state than we found it. As we embark on our future as a sovereign, independent nation, we will not only protect but enhance environmental standards, protecting it for generations to come and cementing our status as a world leader on the environment.

In order to maximise benefits and value for money, we have identified six key areas around which action will be focused:

- using and managing land sustainably;
- recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes;
- connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing;
- increasing resource efficiency, and reducing pollution and waste;
- securing clean, productive and biologically diverse seas and oceans; and
- protecting and improving the global environment.

The coronavirus pandemic will inevitably accelerate change in many ways throughout society. There will be a period of rapid reappraisal of legislative and fiscal frameworks, supply chains and consumer preferences. This potentially enables us to be even more radical, both domestically and internationally, in how we reimagine environmental and animal protection.

### **Questions for discussion**

1. After the coronavirus pandemic, in what ways might we seek new international agreements on environmental standards to prevent the transmission of disease from animals to humans in foreign food chains—e.g. "wet markets", animals living close to humans, and illegal wildlife trade—and on the habitat loss that forces humans and wildlife into closer proximity?
2. Where and how should we diverge from our currently-embedded EU environmental and animal welfare standards to achieve a "green Brexit"?
3. Should we use our new independent trade policy to drive or require improvements in environmental and animal husbandry standards from foreign suppliers in our imports (e.g. by offering lower tariffs for those who achieve higher standards) or is this either modern imperialism or trade protectionism in disguise?
4. As we re-open the economy after the lockdown, how might we build on the recent collaboration between UK companies and charities on projects in the national interest? How might we preserve environmental improvements (such as the better air quality that resulted from reduced transport use) and tackle other threats (such as environmental degradation and air pollution) in a way that doesn't constrain economic growth?
5. What steps should the Government be taking, potentially as part of the post-pandemic economic recovery, to make our economy more resilient to the effects of changes in the climate and to other environmental shocks? How might we move to a more seasonal food supply and promote British producers more effectively?
6. What should we aim to achieve from hosting COP26 in Glasgow next year?
7. Is there any other observation you would like to make?