

EMBARGO: MONDAY 02 SEPTEMBER 2024, 12:00pm

1,000+ Climate Scientists and Health Professionals call on MPs to back new Climate and Nature Bill as Parliament returns from Recess

Leading experts challenge MPs to "stand up for the people of the UK and across the world" in an unprecedented [open letter](#) championing crucial, new legislation

LONDON, 02 SEPTEMBER: As the new Labour Government reaches the halfway mark of their first 100 days in office, 1,176 leading climate scientists, ecologists, academics and medical professionals have [signed a letter](#) calling on MPs to fast-track new legislation, the [Climate and Nature Bill \(CAN Bill\)](#).

A selection of supporting signatories gathered outside Parliament this morning to hand in the [letter](#) to the politicians from each of the main parties—combined with a symbolic offering of an **oak tree** sapling—urging MPs to take decisive action on the climate and nature crisis.

The action today comes at a critical time on the political agenda as MPs return to Westminster following summer recess, and ahead of the [Private Members' Bill Ballot process](#)—which begins this week on Thursday 05 September—and ends on Wednesday 16 October, when 20 successful MPs will present their bills of choice.

Led by esteemed figures such as Prof Dame E.J. Milner-Gulland (University of Oxford) and Prof Nathalie Pettorelli (Zoological Society London), the letter signatories also include **Nobel Prize winners**—Prof Sir John Walker (Nobel Laureate in Chemistry) and Prof John O'Keefe (Nobel Laureate in Physiology)—as well as Prof Dame Henrietta Moore (UCL), Prof Emily Shuckburgh OBE (University of Cambridge) and Prof Sir David King, former Government Chief Scientific Adviser.

In their letter, 1,176 leading climate scientists, ecologists and medical professionals urge MPs to “step up to this historic moment”, emphasising that **this is “the last, best chance we have** to show leadership in steering the course of humanity towards a future where we can thrive, not merely survive”. The experts go on to personally challenge MPs, stating that “this can be your defining moment”, and call on them to “stand up for the people of the UK and across the world”.

Dr Amy McDonnell, co-director of [Zero Hour](#), the cross-party campaign promoting the Climate and Nature Bill, said: “There are many pressing issues that the new Government is facing, but prioritising the climate-nature crisis must be pushed at the top of Parliament’s agenda. Protecting the climate and restoring nature is essential for the UK’s energy security, wellbeing and protecting the stuff of life—the air we breath, the water we drink, and the food to eat. We’re now at the halfway point of Labour’s critical first 100 days in office. Keir Starmer has 50 days to prove that he’s listening to, and acting upon, the advice of 1,000 of the UK’s most eminent scientists. Now is the time for Labour to fully support the Climate and Nature Bill.”

The CAN Bill is the only proposed legislation that ensures a joined-up, science-led and cross-party approach to tackle the dual climate and nature crises. Following the general election, the CAN Bill now has the backing of **20% of Labour MPs**—including Darren Jones (Treasury Secretary), Louise Haigh (Transport Secretary), Miatta Fahnbulleh (Energy Minister) and Emma Hardy (Environment Minister). With 170 MPs and 63 Peers on board—including **Lord Zac Goldsmith, Ed Davey MP and Carla Denyer MP**—it is the largest, cross-party environmental caucus in Parliament. While Labour has currently signed up to the “ambitions and

EMBARGO: MONDAY 02 SEPTEMBER 2024, 12:00pm

objectives” of the CAN Bill, the new Government has yet to come out in full support and take it up as part of their legislative programme.

Dame Prof E.J. Milner-Gulland, letter co-author, said: “Our natural world is under threat; which means humanity—we—are also under threat. Nature is our best ally against climate change, and so instead of destroying it we need to start helping it to recover. To achieve the rapid turn-around required, we need legislation that provides the framework for an integrated, systemic, response to the interconnected climate and nature emergencies—we must follow the science and make the Climate and Nature Act a reality.”

Prof Nathalie Pettorelli, letter co-author, said: “Scientists don’t like signing up to things. Yet this letter, calling on MPs to fast track the Climate and Nature Bill, has been signed by over one thousand top UK climate scientists, ecologists, conservationists and medical professionals—including Nobel laureates. These experts know that we need to rise fully to the greatest, long-term, global challenge we face—the climate and ecological emergency. And, crucially, that we need an integrated, overarching plan to drive urgent, necessary action in this critical decade. The CAN Bill is a viable, long-term, legislative solution—and it’s ready to go. The government needs this Bill. We’re asking UK politicians not to ignore us—listen to the science and back the CAN Bill.”

###

All 1,176 letter signatories can be seen from page 02 on the following link:
<https://www.zerohour.uk/downloads/can-bill-letter.pdf>

About the CAN Bill

The [Climate and Nature Bill](#) represents a comprehensive plan for new UK legislation to address the full scale of the climate-nature crisis, grounded in the strongest scientific evidence.

The CAN Bill was introduced in Parliament in 2020 and has been tabled five times over 2019-24, but not given time to progress. It aims to reduce UK emissions in line with the country’s share of the remaining global carbon budget for limiting warming to 1.5°C—and to halt and reverse nature’s destruction by 2030—through a bold, integrated, whole of government plan.

The CAN Bill is backed by 170 MPs and 63 Peers across all major political parties; 1,155 leading scientists; 371 local councils—plus business leaders from companies like JLL, Arup, Natura & Co, The Co-operative Bank, SUEZ and Triodos Bank. Notable advocates include **Chris Packham CBE, Deborah Meaden, Dr Amir Khan GP and Dale Vince**. Friends of the Earth, The Women’s Institute, CPRE and Surfers Against Sewage stand behind the CAN Bill.

The Zero Hour campaign is mobilising constituents across the UK to urge their MPs to prioritise legislative action on the dual crises of climate change and nature loss—by supporting the CAN Bill—and urging the Prime Minister to give time for the CAN Bill to proceed in Parliament.

Zero Hour (CAN Bill campaign) website: [zerohour.uk/climate-and-nature-bill](https://www.zerohour.uk/climate-and-nature-bill)