

Of the hundreds of emails and letters I receive from constituents every month, about 25% are about food, agriculture, animals and the environment - and for good reason! The UK's ecosystem and the natural environment worldwide are not just compatible with economic progress, they depend on each other!

I think people are becoming far more aware of our wider environment and how human society contributes to its future, successful or otherwise. I am certainly more conscious of the educational programmes that seem to engage children in wider issues by localising their learning, for example how littering here can lead to the pollution of rivers which in turn kills fish, then mammals and so on. But educating future generations is only part of the picture. Government has an essential role to play.

While nationally we are on track with carbon emissions - haven't fallen by 6 percent since 2010 contributing to a 27 per cent reduction since the '1990 level' - there is plenty more to be done with our food system and animal welfare standards.

We are on the right track with the ban on microbeads used in cosmetics and cleaning products and Michael Gove announcing CCTV will be mandatory in all slaughterhouses in England. DEFRA is currently modernising statutory animal welfare codes to reflect enhancements in medicines, technology and the latest research and advice from vets. The new codes will be enshrined in law and the first to be updated will cover chickens bred for meat.

Brexit now offers us an opportunity to reimagine much of the laws that govern food from farm to plate, including much hated live animal exports rules. At the moment DEFRA has open consultations and wants to hear your views! So please get involved today and help shape post-Brexit animal and environmental policy that will form the future for our children.