



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon George Eustice MP
Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR

Our Ref: ALMG
5th July 2021

Dear Secretary of State,

Re: The Plastic Crisis

I am writing to you as a great number of my constituents have contacted me raising concerns about the global plastics crisis.

As you will know the UK is a major contributor to the world's plastic crisis, generating more plastic waste per person than any other country except the USA. There are reports that our recycling system is not working and I am concerned by the Government's continued delay and the lack of ambition of measures to address the problem at source.

In their recent report, "Trashed", Greenpeace highlighted the problems caused by the UK dumping plastic waste on the rest of the world. It states that our waste is overwhelming other countries' recycling systems, causing serious harm to their citizens and environment, particularly in Malaysia. The UK government needs to take urgent action to tackle this plastic crisis.

My constituents ask that it can start by banning exports to other countries, including to members of the OECD, to end the dumping of plastic waste that passes for recycling. Some new recycling infrastructure may also be needed so the UK can deal with its own plastic waste. Most importantly, the UK needs to drastically cut the amount of plastic produced in the first place. Reducing single-use plastic by 50% would not only allow the UK to end waste exports, but would also mean less plastic going into incineration and landfill. The government must mandate a 50% reduction in single-use plastic by 2025 – and supermarkets and major brands must deliver it.

Can you tell me what action the Government is taking to reduce the amount of plastic waste the UK produces? Are you considering any of these policies and are you willing to give tangible targets to meet? Given the climate emergency that we all face, I strongly suggest that urgent action should be taken to address these issues. I thank you for your attention to this matter and look forward to your response.

Kind regards

Alyn Smith MP

