Dear Joyce,

Thank you for raising the important issue of trade and the environment in the House last week. I promised to write to you regarding assessments of the environmental impacts of increased trade with non-EU countries.

The Government is currently considering the best way to provide a robust and credible assessment of the wide range of impacts of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) for Parliament and the public. As part of this, we are taking into account responses from the Department for International Trade’s public consultation on future trade negotiations with the US, Australia and New Zealand.

The Government will publish a scoping assessment of the broad impacts of new FTAs, prior to negotiations commencing. This will include a preliminary assessment of the potential implications for the environment. The Government will also publish a full impact assessment alongside the full treaty text at the end of negotiations.

The Government is clear that more trade should not come at the expense of the environment. We will maintain and enhance our already high environmental standards through future trade agreements.

A copy of this letter will be deposited in the House of Lords library and sent to all Peers who spoke.