Dear X,

I am writing in my capacity as to you to ask you to pledge your support for a new UK ‘human rights and environmental due diligence’ law - a law to prevent business abuses of human rights and environmental destruction in their supply chains, as called for by [businesses](https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/uk-businesses-and-investors-call-for-new-human-rights-due-diligence-law/),  [investors](https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/investor-letter-for-uk-human-rights-due-diligence/), [civil society organisations](https://corporatejusticecoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/CJC-BHREA-Principles-1.pdf) and the UK public.

From deforestation and land grabs to forced labour and poor working conditions, UK companies’ supply chains are responsible for serious damage to the environment, communities and workers around the world. For this reason our local action group Friends of the Earth X has decided to join the Friends of the Earth Planet over Profit campaign, which is calling for a new law.

This campaign is part of the wider movement, coordinated by the Corporate Justice Coalition (CJC) In March, civil society groups launched [the Good Business Matters website featuring pledges of support](https://www.goodbusinessmatters.org/decision-makers-pledge/) for a new law from a range of decision makers from across political parties. **We are asking you to also become a signatory to this specific pledge, the text for which is also at the end of this email.**

Current UK legislation is sorely inadequate – on human rights for instance, the Modern Slavery Act’s restricted and ineffective focus on reporting on only forced labour and without any sanctions for non-compliance has already been noted by Parliament’s [BEIS Committee](https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/6194/documents/68945/default/)*.*And on the environment, the Environment Act secondary legislation on due diligence on forest-risk commodities, currently being prepared by Defra, will not prevent deforestation associated with UK supply chains. It will instead only cover ‘illegal’ deforestation (as defined by producer country laws) and will only apply to limited commodities and to very large companies. It also completely excludes human rights.

In 2011, the United Nations unanimously adopted the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which the UK Government still supports. The Principles elaborate and call for states to introduce new mandatory due diligence laws. Such laws are now rapidly becoming the new international consensus for regulating global value chains in order to prevent, mitigate and account for human rights abuses and environmental destruction. Countries in [Europe](https://corporatejustice.org/publications/comparative-table-corporate-due-diligence-laws-and-legislative-proposals-in-europe/), including [France](https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/big-issues/corporate-legal-accountability/frances-duty-of-vigilance-law/), [Germany](https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/german-due-diligence-law/), the [Netherlands](https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/dutch-bill-on-responsible-and-sustainable-international-business-conduct/) and the EU bloc itself, are now moving beyond the UK in tabling new laws. The UK must catch up.

You can find further detail in this [Parliamentary Briefing](https://corporatejusticecoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/CJC-General-Parliamentary-Briefing-2022-FINAL-2.pdf) and set of key [principles](https://corporatejusticecoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/CJC-BHREA-Principles-1.pdf) for a new UK law, each endorsed by more than 30 civil society organisations. The key points from these are also below:

* A [statement](https://media.business-humanrights.org/media/documents/UK_BUSINESS_STATEMENT_MHREDD_Sept22.pdf) in support of a law from businesses including the British Retail Consortium, Sainsbury’s, Tesco, Asos, Primark and the John Lewis Partnership.
* A statement in support of a new law from 38 UK [investors](https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/investor-letter-for-uk-human-rights-due-diligence/) representing £4.5 trillion in assets under management.
* YouGov [polling](https://www.antislavery.org/4-in-5-of-the-british-public-support-new-laws-to-prevent-exploitation-of-people/) showing that 4 in 5 Britons want a new law to end exploitation of workers and environmental destruction in supply chains.
* A joint [petition](https://corporatejusticecoalition.org/our-campaigns/due-diligence-law/) calling for a new UK law, with over 100,000 signatures drawn from supporters of Friends of the Earth, Anti-Slavery International, SumOfUs, Transform Trade, Freedom United and the Corporate Justice Coalition.
* Parliament’s Joint Committee on Human Rights 2017 [recommendations](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt201617/jtselect/jtrights/443/443.pdf) on business and human rights, including a recommendation for a new UK law modelled on the Bribery Act 2010.
* The 2022 G7 Leaders’ Communiqué, [outlining](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/57555/2022-06-28-leaders-communique-data.pdf) a joint commitment to “*coherent implementation of and compliance with international standards relating to human rights, environment, and labour across global supply chains*”, including via, “*mandatory measures that protect rights-holders, provide for greater multilateral cooperation to address abuses, and support remedy, thus enhancing predictability and certainty for business*”.

As part of the Corporate Justice Coalition we are planning to greatly increase our advocacy efforts in the run-up to the next General Election, which will include efforts to table draft bills in Parliament.

Please let me know if you would be happy to sign the pledge below, and if useful, we would be very happy to meet you to discuss this further.

With best wishes,

**XXX**

**‘Good Business Matters’ pledge for Parliamentarians and decision-makers**

*(MPs, Peers, mayors, MSPs, MSs, MLAs, leaders of councils)*

I support a new law on business, human rights and the environment to protect people and planet from abuse.  
I recognise that UK businesses, investors, the public and civil society groups support the call for a new UK law requiring the conduct of human rights and environmental due diligence by business and the public sector.

I agree that we can no longer leave these vital issues to voluntary initiatives, which businesses themselves now recognise do not provide adequate protection for human rights and the environment. A new law must include accountability mechanisms, including enforcement and the provision of access to justice for victims.

A new law would:

* Demonstrate UK leadership on business and human rights
* Ensure people and the planet are protected from human rights abuses and environmental destruction
* Allow investors to identify the greatest risks to and impacts on people and the planet linked to portfolios
* Align the UK with advances being made in many other countries
* Provide a ‘level playing field’, including for responsible businesses at risk of being undercut by less scrupulous competitors.