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Scottish Parliament

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3 September 2025

Dear Edward,

## **INTER-MINISTERIAL GROUP FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS MEETING**

This letter updates the Committee on the key points from the meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Group for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (IMG EFRA) held virtually on 23 June 2025.

The meeting opened with an emphasis on the importance of regular meetings and a shared commitment to intergovernmental engagement.

The Group then held the second deep dive from the agreed work plan, focussing on the circular economy, where Ms Martin, Cabinet Secretary for Climate Action and Energy, represented Scottish Government. All governments agreed the necessity to preserve natural resources, reduce carbon emissions and support economic growth. Discussion highlighted shared priorities for all four governments including evidence-sharing, identifying products to tackle environmental impact and make supply chains more resilient, and wider collaborative opportunities.

Another item was on the outcomes of the UK-EU summit on 19 May and the importance of engagement at official and ministerial level across all impacted sectors in upcoming negotiations and implementation. Ministers discussed matters including the importance of maintaining biosecurity in light of increasing animal disease threats and in the transition towards implementation of a UK-EU sanitary and phytosanitary agreement. Devolved government ministers pressed that the UK “Fishing and Coastal Growth Fund” should be devolved.

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Other items included the link between finalising Common Frameworks and the ongoing review of the UK Internal Market Act, the next stage in the process for the geographical indication application for English single malt whisky, the potential ban on the use of horticultural peat and a revised work programme for the IMG.

A readout of the meeting and summary of attendance are included in the communiqué that has been published on the Scottish Government website at [Inter-Ministerial Group for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs - gov.scot](#).

The next meeting of the group is scheduled to take place in September 2025.

I hope this summary is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

**MAIRI GOUGEON**

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