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Finlay Carson MSP
Convener of the Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural
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Dear Finlay

As you will be aware I am due to appear before the Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural Environment Committee on Wednesday 25 January to answer questions on the Joint Fisheries Statement (JFS).

From reports in the press (<https://www.endsreport.com/article/1810868/green-campaigners-issue-legal-threat-fish-farming-regulation>) you may be aware that the DEFRA Secretary of State, Therese Coffey, and UK devolved Ministers have been contacted by environmental campaigners who are seeking to bring legal action over the contents of the JFS.

I have received a legal letter in conjunction with this case and as a result, there may be times when I am limited in what I can say at Committee in response to certain questions touching on issues raised in the legal letter.

In these circumstances, I would be grateful for your assistance and understanding helping to manage the questions from the Committee, particularly on issues which may be relevant in any future legal case. I am of course happy to appear again at a later date, when I am not subject to legal constraints

MAIRI GOUGEON

