Dear Bruce,

Finance and Constitution Committee consideration of the Trade Bill

The Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee recently took evidence from legal academics with expertise in environmental law and stakeholders on the implications for Scotland of the UK’s decision to leave the European Union (EU):

- Official report of meeting 23 January 2018
- Written Submissions from Witnesses on 23 January 2018

The Committee heard wide ranging evidence, including on issues relating to trade and, as your Committee is currently considering the Legislative Consent Memorandum (LCM) on the Bill, the Committee agreed to bring the content of this discussion and the written evidence it received to your attention. The main themes of the evidence heard in Committee are summarised below:

- The role of the devolved administrations and legislatures in trade deals;
- A UK internal market and how divergence within the UK could impact both internal trade and international trade deals;
- Challenges in developing, implementing and agreeing common frameworks, including those on trade;
- Stakeholder engagement;
- The prominence of environmental and animal welfare standards in international trade negotiations, including with the EU, and the desire to maintain equivalent or higher standards and a reputation for excellence;
- Scrutiny of the Trade Bill and resulting subordinate legislation;
- Monitoring, reporting and scrutinising of environmental standards, including reporting of breaches and arbitration; and
• Transposition of environmental principles of EU environmental and animal welfare law.

On the last point, the Committee has undertaken to conduct an inquiry on this subject and details of this, including the call for views, can be found here. The Committee is also hearing from the Minister for UK Negotiations on Scotland’s Place in Europe on this issue in relation to the European Union (Legal Continuity) (Scotland) Bill on Tuesday 13 March.

I have asked the Committee’s clerks to keep you informed of the progress of the Committee’s inquiry.

I hope you find this helpful.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Graeme Dey MSP
Convener
Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee