



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Lorna Slater MSP
Minister for Green Skills, Circular
Economy and Biodiversity
Scottish Government

**Net Zero, Energy and Transport
Committee**

c/o Clerk to the Committee
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

By email only

netzero.committee@parliament.scot

23 March 2023

Dear Lorna,

Explanation on Comments made regarding Nature Capital Partnership

Thank you for attending an evidence session with the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee on 14 March to discuss the outcomes of the 15th UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15).

I understand the Clerks to the Committee have contacted your Private Office to note, in the usual way, the points you had helpfully undertook to follow up on during the session. Included in these points was any further information you could provide on a recent Memorandum of Understanding on nature restoration projects signed by NatureScot. You mentioned Hampden & Co, a private bank, as the MOU's co-signatory. I note from information on NatureScot's website that there are two other signatories: Lombard Odier Investment Managers and Palladium; a "global impact firm".

You will recall that, as part of our discussions on the pilot project, you stated that the Scottish Government was not part of the new partnership agreement signed between NatureScot and the private firms. Therefore, while you undertook to share what information you could, you told us that it was likely to be limited.

It would be very helpful if, in the course of replying to me on the matters listed in the clerk's email, you could clarify what role, if any, the Scottish Government played in achieving the MOU and whether the Scottish Government has any legal status or role in relation to it. I am specifically asking this in view of print and online media reports at the time appearing to show you as a joining in the signing of an agreement with the parties to the MOU.

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Edward Mountain

Edward Mountain MSP
Convener
Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee