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Scottish Parliament

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4 March 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 27 January 2025.

The main item was an exchange on environmental land management where discussion illustrated similarities across key themes that each government was aiming to achieve with respective schemes: sustainable food production, holistic farm support and ensuring that environmental outcomes are delivered. Ministers agreed the importance of harnessing academic and scientific expertise and to continue sharing best practice on providing holistic support and advice to farmers. Ministers from the devolved governments shared their disappointment that Treasury ministers had not attended to discuss agricultural funding, as had been requested at the previous IMG.

Another discussion was on the UK Government Circular Economy Taskforce wherein Ms Martin, Acting Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy, represented Scottish Government. Ministers agreed the importance of the circular economy in achieving economic growth and shared environmental and climate ambitions, and looked forward to a more detailed exchange at the next meeting of the IMG.

Other items included an update on potential negotiations on a UK-EU sanitary and phytosanitary / veterinary agreement, bovine electronic identification and the UK Government food strategy. A range of other business included updates on the IMG work programme, Common Frameworks and animal diseases.

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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: January 2025 - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/inter-ministerial-group-for-environment-food-and-rural-affairs-january-2025).

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

I hope this summary is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

**MAIRI GOUGEON**

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