



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

The Rt Hon Mark Spencer MP  
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Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP  
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Our ref: MC2023/10636/LT

18 July 2023

Dear Sir George,

Thank you for your email of 1 June to the Secretary of State on behalf of your constituents about live animal exports. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

As outlined in our 2021 Action Plan for Animal Welfare, the Government has an ambitious agenda for animal welfare and conservation reforms, which we plan to take forward during the current Parliamentary session and beyond. We will continue to introduce and support legislative and non-legislative reforms where possible.

The UK has some of the highest animal welfare standards in the world. Since the publication of the Action Plan, we have delivered on key manifesto commitments: we have increased the penalties for those convicted of animal cruelty, passed the Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022 and launched the Animal Sentience Committee. We have made cat microchipping compulsory and have announced the extension of the Ivory Act (2018) to cover five endangered species: hippopotamus, narwhal, killer whale, sperm whale and walrus.

In addition, we have provided for penalty notices to apply to animal welfare offences, introduced new police powers to tackle hare coursing, banned glue traps and supported the Private Members' Bill to ban the trade in detached shark fins. We are also supporting Private Members' Bills banning the import of hunting trophies (which is a manifesto commitment) and the advertising here of low-welfare animal experiences abroad.

The Bills and regulations we have already passed demonstrate the progress which can be made with single-issue legislation. In light of this, we will be taking forward measures from the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill individually through other means during the remainder of this Parliament. We believe this to be the quickest and most effective way of achieving these aims.

Your constituents specifically refer to the export of live animals for fattening and slaughter. We are determined to deliver this manifesto commitment. There have not been any live exports for fattening or slaughter since 2020 and we want to make this permanent. Parliamentary business will be announced in the usual way.

I hope this reassures you that the Government is working hard to take steps in further improving our already high standards of animal welfare.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you need further information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "M Spencer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "M" being a large, stylized initial.

**Rt Hon Mark Spencer MP**