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Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about the health of our waters.

Through our COP26 and G7 Presidencies, the UK will showcase global leadership in tackling key pressures facing the ocean, using its influence to advocate for greater action and global collaboration. Ministers also intend to publish an update to the UK Marine Strategy Part 3, outlining the programmes of measures that will continue to move the UK towards Good Environmental Status in its seas.

At the recent One Planet Summit, the UK accepted the position as Ocean Co-Chair of the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People. Between this and the UK-led Global Ocean Alliance, there are now over 60 countries supporting a target to protect at least 30 per cent of the global ocean by 2030 as part of the aim for an ambitious post-2020 global biodiversity framework for adoption at the *15th Conference of Parties of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity*.

The protection, restoration and management of the marine environment is central to objectives in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. Further, it is encouraging that 38 per cent of UK waters are in Marine Protected Areas and Ministers are focused on ensuring these are effectively protected. Ministers have also stated their intention to pilot Highly Protected Marine Areas in Secretary of State waters, and I look forward to reading the Government's response to Richard Benyon's review on this issue in due course.

Together with Vanuatu, the Government is driving forward ambitious action to reduce plastic pollution in the ocean through the Commonwealth Clean Ocean Alliance, a growing group of 34 Commonwealth member states. The Government has also committed up to £70m to tackle plastic pollution, helping developing countries to prevent plastic waste entering the ocean, and has committed to start negotiations on a new global agreement on marine plastic litter and microplastics.

Finally, Ministers have committed to establishing a new £500m Blue Planet Fund, to help developing countries protect the ocean from key human-generated threats, including pollution.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY