

STOP THE GOVERNMENT DESTROYING NATURE

An essay by Michael Davis, Landscape Architect and believer in Nature.

I am 76 years old and all my life I have loved being in the natural world, looking at landscapes, learning about Nature, experiencing its moods, its magic, the warmth of the sun, the wind in my hair, swimming in wild seas, emigrating to New Zealand when I was 18, and then coming home to England to realise just how diverse and beautiful it was, its sense of history, culture, heritage and traditions; inspired by wonderful people like David Attenborough.

I became a landscape architect and for the past 50 years have worked with farmers and landowners and a whole range of people to design attractive spaces between buildings, plant trees, conserve wildlife habitats, educate and lobby for greater understanding of our place in Nature and our need to work in harmony with planet earth's ecosystems.

In those last 50 years I have sadly witnessed a massive loss of biodiversity. Wild flower meadows, wetlands, ancient woodlands, hedgerows, birds, butterflies and insects have all seen sharp declines due to our relentless progress to expand and develop our urban infrastructure and intensify agriculture. Turtle doves and nightingales have all but disappeared and bees are being poisoned by farm chemicals.

Modern agriculture is now so industrialised, that it has largely destroyed ancient field patterns, and diverse farm crops have been replaced by monocultures, soils have been seriously degraded and water courses polluted. This is not sustainable

Now the new Tory Government under Liz Truss intends to wage war on Nature. She is the Bolsonaro of Britain. I am outraged.

Economic growth is all that matters, and money, power and status are their Gods. They believe that Nature is there to be exploited further, that we humans own the planet and its natural resources, and to make matters worse – climate change does not really matter and is not urgent – let us put it on hold for a few more years!

This anthropocentric viewpoint is so out of date now, perhaps originating from a Christian belief that God gave man dominion over the Earth. Truss joins Trump and Bolsonaro in playing the God card.

So our new leader wants to abandon all EU regulations protecting the environment, abandon the new Environmental Land Management Scheme which would pay farmers to conserve biodiversity and landscapes, weaken our world leading planning system so that housing can be built on Green Belt land, overturn the UK ban on fracking, and encourage more drilling for oil and gas (fossil fuels) in the North Sea to exacerbate climate change.

These intentions are reckless and mad and will seriously weaken our ability to stop catastrophic climate change and ecosystem collapse. The more we abuse Nature the more will it come back to hit us.

As a society we exploit Nature, we exploit our workforce, we control people through social media – can we not see that we are being manipulated by a dysfunctional unsustainable system that empowers the rich to get richer and makes the workforce poorer. This is the ***Tory Reverse Robin Hood Theory – take from the poor to help the rich.***

To stop this madness we need an ***Environmental Revolution.*** We need all the UK environmental organisations to come together with the other political parties and local government to fight and overturn these insane proposals.

We then need a new mandate to enshrine Nature protection, conservation and enhancement in all National and Local Government policies and actions, as well as immediate actions to tackle Climate Change, and massive re-education programme.

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