

# **Michael Gove to give evidence to Holyrood on Wednesday**

**Michael Gove MP will give evidence to two Scottish Parliament committees this week by video conference.**

The future of the UK's environmental, agricultural and fisheries policies will be explored when the Secretary for State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs attends their meetings.

The Secretary of State will give evidence to two committees who are currently exploring the impact on Brexit on the environment and rural affairs in Scotland.

Both meetings take place on Wednesday 15 May. The Secretary of State will give evidence to the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee at 9.30 am and the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee at 10:45 am. Both sessions will be in Committee Room 1.

Speaking ahead of the meeting, Gillian Martin MSP, Convener of the Environmental, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee said: "It is clear that we are at a cross roads for the environment in Scotland. With Brexit and the ever-present risk of a no deal exit, there are real challenges facing how our environment is protected and managed.

"In addition to hearing whether the UK Government intends to legislate in this devolved area, we will explore issues we've been discussing with stakeholders around chemicals and waste.

"These will be subject to common frameworks – agreed with the UK Government and other devolved administrations – so it is

important to hear the UK Government's priorities and expectations. We want to ensure that the protections and regulations which govern these areas won't be eroded, which could lead to chemicals classed as too unsafe to be imported into the EU could be brought into the UK, or that waste shipments won't be halted.

"We will also seek strong assurances from the Secretary of State that the UK Government will not unpick the devolution settlement and will respect the Scottish Parliament's legislative competence on environmental policy."

[The Scotsman](#) reported that Mr Gove when speaking at the recent Scottish Tories conference hinted that he would like more finances to be retained by Westminster rather than given to the devolved governments in areas such as education and farming. Mr Gove is currently in the running to replace Prime Minister Theresa May if or when she steps down.

Edward Mountain MSP, Convener of the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee said: "The success of the farming and fishing sectors are crucial to rural communities across Scotland, and indeed the UK.

"Leaving the EU, and the terms on which we leave, matter deeply to these vital industries. The policies of both the UK and Scottish Governments will have real and tangible impacts on the prospects of Scottish fishers and farmers.

"With the UK Parliament currently considering both a Fisheries and an Agriculture Bill, which would have consequences for Scotland and the powers of the Scottish Parliament, and the Scottish Government proposing its own Agriculture Bill, this is a timely and important opportunity to put questions to the Secretary of State."