

Petition PE1124

Response from petitioners– League Against Cruel Sports and Advocates for Animals on behalf of the Hare Preservation Trust, Hessilhead Wildlife Rescue Trust, International Otter Survival Fund, Scottish Badgers, Scottish Wildcat Association and almost 11,000 signatories

October 2009

Introduction

The petitioners would like to thank the Committee for again taking up this issue with the Scottish Government. Unfortunately on this occasion, as with in the past, we do not believe that the Government has satisfactorily addressed the questions put to it. We have responded to one of the points in its response below but we feel at this stage that going back to the Government again to seek clarification on the issues not addressed would not be an effective use of the Committee's time.

We believe the Committee has taken our petition as far as it can and while we do not want our petition to be closed we would request the Committee pass the petition on so further action can be taken to advance the will of the petition. In that respect we would urge the Committee to take one of the following actions.

- Institute an inquiry into snaring in Scotland or refer the matter to the Rural Affairs Committee to do the same; or
- Refer the matter to the Scottish Parliament for a debate on snaring.

Letter from Minister for Environment

We address below one of the points made in the Minister's letter of 6 October 2009 to the Committee.

1. The Committee asked the Scottish Government if the proposed Wildlife and Natural Environment bill would include provisions which would impact on the manufacture, sale, possession and use of all snares. The Government has responded by outlining the two provisions which will be included in the bill. Unfortunately neither of these will have any impact on the manufacture, sale, possession and use of snares as these provisions support the continued practice of snaring. For that reason they have no relevance to our petition.

Conclusion

In the months since we lodged our petition with the Committee in March 2008 we have continued to collect evidence of numerous animals which have suffered unnecessarily in snares. These are domestic animals and protected species such as badgers and while this in itself is disturbing it doesn't account for the thousands of wild animals which are trapped and suffer in snares.

We firmly believe public will supports a ban on snaring and while we recognise the Petitions Committee has taken a very thorough approach with our petition it is likely it has taken it as far as it can within the constraints of the Committee. We would however urge it not to close our petition but instead refer the matter on so that the issue remains on the political agenda.