

Scottish Animal Welfare Commission

**Review of Scottish Government Activity
affecting the Welfare of Animals, as Sentient
Beings**

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Review of Scottish Government activity affecting the welfare of animals, as sentient beings

1. Background

Under Regulation 5(2)(b) of the Scottish Animal Welfare Commission Regulations 2020, one of the functions of the Commission is to provide advice on any matters concerning the welfare of protected animals on which the Commission considers it should offer its advice.

At its inaugural meeting in March 2020, the Scottish Animal Welfare Commission agreed that, in addition to its obligation under Regulation 14 of the 2020 Regulations to report on its own activities to the Scottish Ministers and Scottish Parliament, it would be desirable for the Commission also to review relevant activity by the Scottish Government.

The Commission believed that such a review would facilitate its provision of advice to promote the welfare of animals in Scotland. It would also go some way towards replacing the requirement, previously placed upon the UK government (and thereby, the four administrations) by Article 13 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), to pay full regard to animal welfare.

In its first review, published in November 2021, the Commission reviewed the activities of the Scottish Government from 12 May 2016 – 5 May 2021 (Session 5 of the Scottish Parliament), including its legislative proposals and delivery.

This review considers the first year of Session 6, which is the period covered by the Programme for Government 2021-2022 *A Fairer, Greener Scotland*.

2. Scottish Government – Programme for Government

The Scottish Government issued its Programme for Government 2021-2022 (“the Programme”) in September 2021, setting out commitments for the coming parliamentary session. This section covers the main proposals relevant to animal welfare in Scotland, summarises progress to date and comments on issues that have arisen in the process.

Natural environment

Chapter 3 of the Programme, *A Net Zero Nation*, included a commitment to publish a new biodiversity strategy by October 2022 (one year after the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP 26) followed by a five-year delivery plan, covering the use and management of land and the protection of habitats and ecosystems.

A Natural Environment Bill was scheduled for Year 3 of the Parliament, putting in place targets for nature restoration, aiming to prevent further extinctions of wildlife and halt declines by 2030. Progress is to be made towards restoring Scotland’s natural environment by 2045, with targets for species abundance, distribution and extinction risk, and habitat quality and extent. Legislation was also planned to end the supply and manufacture of some single use plastic items, which can cause injury to wild animals.

In furtherance of the latter aim, the Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Scotland) Regulations 2021 came into force on 1 June 2022 (although subject to pending UK parliamentary procedures to exclude the issue from the Internal Market Act 2020). The Regulations make it an offence for businesses in Scotland to provide items plastic cutlery, plates and stirrers, of which it was estimated that around 700 million such items were used in Scotland every year.

Aquaculture

Chapter 4 of the Programme, *An Economy that works for all of Scotland's People and Places*, included specific commitments on animal welfare issues under the heading *A strong and sustainable future for Scottish farming, fishing and aquaculture*.

Noting the economic benefits associated with aquaculture, the Scottish Government also recognised the environmental concerns associated with the industry. Its vision was for sustainable aquaculture with an enhanced emphasis on environmental protection and community benefits, with greater contributions from producers to support inspection services, reduce their environmental impact, provide real community benefit, and support innovation.

A programme of work to better protect wildlife and the environment was proposed. This was in response to the 2020 report of the Salmon Interactions Working Group (SIWG) established following concerns raised by the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform (ECCLR) Committee and the Rural Economy and Connectivity (REC) Committee of the Scottish Parliament over the environmental impacts of salmon and trout farms on wild salmonids. The SIWG report, issued in 2020, acknowledged “the potential hazard that farmed salmonid aquaculture presents to wild salmonids (Atlantic salmon and sea trout) and agreed to examine measures to minimise the potential risk.”

The Programme included a commitment to consult on a spatially adaptive sea lice risk assessment framework for fish farms by the end of the year, and strengthening controls on sea lice, wrasse and fish escapes in the course of 2021-22.

A consultation on proposed wild Atlantic salmon protection zones and a sea lice exposure threshold was launched by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) on behalf of the Scottish Government in December 2021 and closed in March 2022.

SAWC notes from published reactions to the consultation that there were strongly opposing views regarding the impact of sea lice on wild salmon populations. The Scottish Government may wish to request a view from SAWC as to the animal welfare implications of sea lice infestations on affected individuals, as these should not be overlooked. A SAWC working group is already considering the animal welfare impacts of acoustic deterrent devices used to discourage seals from the vicinity of fish farms.

Scottish Veterinary Service

The Programme contained a commitment to ensuring ‘the highest standards of animal health and welfare, including the creation of a new dedicated Scottish

Veterinary Service within this Parliament, to ensure there are highly trained staff to provide Scotland with good animal health and food safety to meet all our needs across the public and private sector for animal health issues”.

In February 2022, the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs confirmed that the field animal health and welfare functions currently delivered by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) in Scotland would be replaced by a new Scottish Veterinary Service (SVS) within the lifetime of the current Parliament. This followed an independent review of field animal health and welfare services by Professor Charles Milne, published in February 2020, which recommended the creation of a stand-alone Scottish animal health and welfare delivery body.

A Programme Board representing organisations involved in the delivery and enforcement of animal health and welfare and food safety has been given responsibility for assessing the proposed functions of the SVS, and what format these may take.

SAWC supports the Scottish Government’s aim of introducing efficiencies, better resilience, and strengthened delivery and enforcement across a range of animal health and welfare tasks.

Animal welfare legislation

The Programme contained commitments specifically aimed at improving the welfare of wild and domesticated animals in Scotland over the course of the current session. In addition to a general review of animal welfare legislation (a requirement placed on the Scottish Government by s.16 of the Animals and Wildlife (Penalties, Protections and Powers) (Scotland) Act 2020), a number of legislative measures were proposed.

Commitments included:

- Introducing a Bill in 2021 to strengthen the law relating to the use of dogs to hunt and flush foxes and other wild mammals, implementing the majority of the recommendations of the independent report on the Protection of Wild Mammals (Scotland) Act 2002 (the Bonomy report), and introducing further measures such as preventing trail hunting.

At the time of writing, the Hunting with Dogs (Scotland) Bill, which meets these commitments, was nearing completion of Stage 1 in the Scottish Parliament. (See Section 3 for more detail.) SAWC provided written and oral evidence to the Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural Environment (RAINE) Committee in support of the Bill.

- Working with other UK administrations on legislation to control exports of livestock and imports of dogs, modernise zoo licensing, and control import and sale of products that raise ethical concerns such as fur.

This commitment referred to two pieces of potential Westminster legislation proposed as part of the UK government’s action plan for animal welfare, published in May 2021.

The Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill, introduced on 8 June 2021, contains provisions that extend to Scotland, including prohibition of export of livestock for

slaughter or fattening, powers to more tightly control the importation of dogs, cats and ferrets and improvements to zoo licensing, as well as other changes. A legislative consent motion (LCM) was lodged by the Scottish Government on the basis that “the changes proposed in the Bill address matters of significant public concern for animal welfare which are within the legislative competence of the Scottish Parliament and require primary legislation to effect. These are areas where consistent changes to legislation in all GB administrations at the same time will be particularly important and beneficial.”

SAWC gave evidence on animal welfare issues to the Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural Environment Committee of the Scottish Parliament in November 2021 and supported the provisions of the Bill that affect Scotland. The LCM was passed in January 2022, but the Bill was delayed in the UK parliament. It has been carried over into the current session but, at the time of this review, it is not known when it will resume its progress.

A joint consultation on proposed new zoo standards: [Standards of Modern Zoo Practice for Great Britain](#) did however run from March to June 2022

A second relevant piece of Westminster legislation was foreseen in the form of an Animals Abroad Bill. This was expected to introduce prohibitions on imports from trophy hunting, the sale and import of fur and foie gras, and the advertisement and sale of certain animal experiences overseas such as elephant rides, that are considered cruel.

This Bill has now been taken off the UK government’s legislative agenda. A Private Member’s Bill covering trophy hunting has been introduced by Henry Smith MP, with UK government backing, but its scope is more limited than the original proposal.

SAWC agrees with the Scottish Government that the changes proposed under the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill are desirable for the benefit of animal welfare, as was the potential Animals Abroad Bill. It is hoped that progress on these matters will resume in the UK Parliament as soon as possible.

- Consultations on proposals to improve animal transport legislation, and phase out cages for gamebirds and laying hens, and farrowing crates for pigs; and on legislation to extend the framework for licensing of activities involving animals, to new areas such as performing animals and animal care services.

The Scottish Government is currently participating with other GB administrations in a series of stakeholder workshops on possible changes to animal transport legislation. Initial evidence gathering and discussions with stakeholders on extending the licensing of activities involving animals are also taking place. SAWC looks forward to publication of consultations and expects to submit full responses in due course.

- Implementing recent livestock worrying legislation which will come into force in November 2021.

The Dogs (Protection of Livestock) (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 2021 came into force on 14 November 2021.

This increases the maximum available penalty for allowing dogs to chase or attack livestock to 12 months imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £40,000, and gives new powers to Police Scotland to seize dogs for examination by a veterinary surgeon.

The Scottish Government has published guidance for veterinary surgeons on the collection of evidence from dogs which might be presented to them by the police following a livestock attack.

- Through an independent taskforce, considering whether the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Scottish SPCA) should be given extra legislative powers to investigate wildlife crime.

The Cabinet Secretary announced in June 2022 that Susan Davies FRSB, Chief Executive of the Scottish Seabird Centre had been appointed to lead a taskforce including representatives from Police Scotland, the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service and Scottish Government policy officials.

Given that the taskforce is still deliberating, SAWC is not in a position to comment on its work but stands ready to offer views on wild animal welfare if these should be requested. There can be no doubt that wildlife crime impacts negatively on the welfare of sentient individual animals, and SAWC sees it as desirable to ensure that the maximum enforcement capacity is available for prompt investigation and enforcement whenever required.

- Reviewing the wider species licensing system with a view to ensuring that the law is being applied correctly and that lethal control is only licensed where the conditions required for such a licence are demonstrably being met. The review will also assess the potential to apply the principle of full cost recovery to species licensing and the introduction of a public register of licences to improve transparency.

SAWC understands that this work is under way and looks forward to further developments.

Grouse moor licensing and deer management

The Programme noted the need for “urgent action” to tackle wildlife crime and to address the environmental impacts of grouse moor management. Commitments included supporting the transition to “more economically and environmentally productive uses of land where appropriate” and delivering the recommendations of the Grouse Moor Management Review Group (the Werritty review) as a matter of urgency, including the licensing of grouse moors. Licensing will be supported by clear penalties to encourage compliance, as well as additional effort to detect wildlife crime.

SAWC looks forward to legislation in the near future, which we understand is likely to include other measures relevant to wild animal welfare.

The Scottish Government also proposed to modernise deer management, implementing the recommendations of the Deer Management Working Group and

introducing a new cull return system, to ensure proportionate deer management plans, modernising legislation, including deer close seasons and use of specialist equipment when managing deer, and designing future agricultural support schemes to encourage a reduction in grazing pressure in the uplands.

SAWC has previously supported the recommendations of the Deer Management Working Group and notes the importance of proposed legislation including measures to protect the welfare of deer when they are subject to management measures.

Good Food Nation Bill

The Programme for Government 2021-2022 reiterated a previous commitment to introduce a Good Food Nation Bill, providing a legislative framework to place responsibilities on the Scottish Ministers and specified public bodies to publish and adhere to statements of policy on food setting out the main outcomes to be achieved in relation to food-related issues, the policies needed to do this, and the indicators or other measures required to assess progress.

The Bill was introduced in October 2021, passed in June 2022, and enacted on 26 July 2022.

In its previous review of Scottish Government activity, SAWC recommended that the Good Food Nation Bill should include measures recognising that good animal welfare is a part of sustainable food production and food quality. The original Bill did not contain any such reference, but the matter was the subject of robust stakeholder lobbying and amendments were agreed during Stage 2 to incorporate a set of principles, including the improvement of animal welfare, to which the Scottish Ministers and relevant public authorities must have regard when preparing their Good Food Nation plans.

The Bill was also amended at Stage 3 to provide for the creation of an independent food commission to provide oversight of the progress of the Good Food Nation measures. SAWC welcomes both the addition of principles that include animal welfare and the creation of the new Commission and will be pleased to collaborate with the Commission as required on animal welfare issues and policy.

3. Scottish Government animal welfare legislation and policy

This section summarises the relevant legislation and policy developments during the Scottish Parliamentary term 2021-2022.

The Animals and Wildlife (Penalties, Protections and Powers) (Scotland) Act 2020 (Commencement No. 3 and Transitional Provision) Regulations 2021

These Regulations brought into force on 30 September 2021 the provisions of the 2020 Act regarding disqualification orders and the new powers for inspectors allowing animals taken into possession to protect their welfare to be treated, rehomed or destroyed without requiring a court order.

The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Scotland) Regulations 2021

These Regulations came into force on 1 September 2021 and provide a modern system for the licensing of persons selling animals as pets, rehoming animals as pets, operating animal welfare establishments (including sanctuaries and rehoming centres), breeding dogs, breeding cats and breeding rabbits. The Regulations contain detailed licence conditions for these activities. The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2021 came into force on 10 October 2021 to correct deficiencies in the wording of the specific conditions regarding rehoming of kittens and supply of young animals by animal welfare establishments.

Scottish Government guidance for animal welfare establishments was issued in December 2021: [The Animal Welfare \(Licensing of Activities Involving Animals\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2021: guidance for animal welfare establishments - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/consultations-policies/animal-welfare/animal-welfare-establishments-guidance-2021/)

Scottish Government officials have worked closely with Scottish SPCA and Scottish local authorities on training for inspectors on the new licensing requirements.

Dog training aids

A review of the effectiveness of Scottish Government guidance on dog training aids was published in June 2021: [Dog training aids guidance: review - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/consultations-policies/dog-training-aids-guidance-review-2021/). A SAWC working group is currently considering the issue of aversive training aids and whether legislation or further guidance would be appropriate.

Restorative Justice

A review of the available evidence on the use of community-based restorative justice and empathy-based interventions in animal welfare and wildlife crime was published in January 2022: [Restorative justice and empathy training for animal welfare and wildlife offences \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/consultations-policies/restorative-justice-and-empathy-training-for-animal-welfare-and-wildlife-offences-2022/). This followed a commitment given to explore this area during the passage of the Animals and Wildlife (Penalties, Protections and Powers) (Scotland) Act 2020

Hunting with Dogs (Scotland) Bill

In recognition of concerns about the effectiveness of the current fox-hunting legislation, the Scottish Government asked one of Scotland's most senior judges, Lord Bonomy, to carry out a detailed review of the Protection of Wild Mammals (Scotland) Act 2002. A consultation on Lord Bonomy's recommendations closed in January 2018. The subsequent report can be found [here](#).

The Hunting with Dogs (Scotland) Bill was introduced to the Scottish Parliament on 24 February 2022. The Bill broadly replicates the core provisions of the 2002 Act that it replaces, but also addresses the inconsistencies and ambiguities in the language of the existing legislation in order to make the law easier to understand and enforce.

The Bill provides that it is an offence to chase and/or kill a wild mammal using a dog. It also introduces new measures to:

- Limit the number of dogs that can be used to search for, stalk or flush mammals from cover above ground to two
- Introduce a licensing scheme for the use of more than two dogs to search for, stalk or flush wild mammals above ground in certain limited circumstances
- Limit the number of dogs that can be used to search for or flush foxes or mink from cover below ground to one
- Prohibit the activity known as trail hunting (the activity of directing a dog to find and follow an animal-based scent)

The Grouse Moor Management Group (Werritty Review)

The Independent review of grouse moor management was commissioned by the Scottish Government in response to a report from NatureScot which showed that around one-third of tagged golden eagles had disappeared on or around driven grouse moors.

The Group's remit was to examine the environmental impact of grouse moor management practices such as muirburn, the use of medicated grit and mountain hare culls and advise on the option of licensing grouse shooting businesses.

Their report, which was published on 19 December 2019, recommended licensing of grouse shooting businesses and also made over 40 recommendations on other aspects of grouse moor management.

The Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment announced the Government's response to this report in the Scottish Parliament on 26 November 2020.

The Scottish Government broadly accepted all of the recommendations and committed introducing a licensing regime in the next Parliament (this current session). A Bill reflecting this position will be introduced to Parliament this parliamentary term, following consultation.

The Deer Working Group Review

The report of the independent Deer Working Group published on 29 January 2020 made 99 recommendations for change to deer management arrangements. These are broad-ranging proposals including phasing out the use of lead ammunition to cull deer, modernisation of existing deer legislation, the development of robust deer management plans and enhanced monitoring of deer numbers.

The Scottish Government accepted 92 of the recommendations and work to deliver the recommendations is being taken forward. As noted above, SAWC has previously supported the recommendations of the Deer Management Working Group and the importance of proposed legislation including measures to protect the welfare of deer when they are subject to management measures.

Beaver Translocations

Following a trial reintroduction at Knapdale, Scottish Ministers agreed that beavers could remain in Scotland and were given European Protected Species status on 1 May 2021.

NatureScot issues licences to enable beavers to be managed. Following concerns that too many licences were issued for lethal control, the Scottish Government committed to increasing the use of translocation, including financial and practical support.

A National Beaver Strategy has been developed by NatureScot with the support of other stakeholders including NFUS, SLE, SWT and RZSS. It includes details of goals, objectives and actions over the first 10 years and is designed to be used with existing frameworks, in particular the 'Scottish Code for Conservation Translocations' and the 'Management Framework for Beavers in Scotland'.

NatureScot was charged with implementing the new policy direction from the start of the new trapping season in the summer of 2022. Projects that aim to create new populations of beavers outside their current range are now considered for licences, subject to consultation, monitoring and management. Trapping and translocation as a licensed mitigation measure will be carried out by or on behalf of NatureScot.

A SAWC working group has carried out an inquiry into the welfare aspects of lethal and non-lethal control of beavers, with input from stakeholders, and will report before the end of 2022.

Ban on the Sale and Use of Glue Traps

Glue traps, which are used to catch mice and rats, are most commonly used by professional contractors in food premises, where the use of rodenticide poisons is undesirable due to the risk of poison contamination.

There is currently no legislation governing the use of glue trap boards to catch rodents although captured animals fall under the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006.

The SAWC [report on the use of glue traps](#) made several recommendations which the Scottish Government has considered and agrees with their preferred option of a ban on the sale and use of glue traps in Scotland. Legislation is expected in autumn 2022.

Legislation and policies impacting fish welfare from July 2021

The Fish Farming Code of Practice (Scotland) Order 2021 came into force on 22 November 2021 and approves the "Aquaculture Code of Practice - Containment of and Prevention of Escape of Fish on Fish Farms in relation to Marine Mammal Interactions".

The Code provides a combination of guidance for Aquaculture Production Businesses (APBs), together with mandatory standards with which APBs must comply. This includes a requirement for fish farms to consult Marine Scotland and obtain any relevant consents (e.g., European Protected Species licence) if they plan to deploy an Acoustic Deterrent Device (ADD), or demonstrate to Marine Scotland that their planned use will not harm marine mammals.

This legislation enables compliance with the US National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and thus

permits continued export of farmed fish to the United States. Currently, no APBs in Scotland have an EPS License and so the use of ADDs has ceased for the time being. A report of recent enforcement activity by MS Compliance will be published shortly on the Marine Scotland webpages.

Seal predation at marine fish farms remains a significant problem for the sector. Their presence around fish farms may also have an impact on the health and welfare of farmed fish and may make them more susceptible to infection, or less able to cope with external treatments e.g., for sea lice, due to increased physical stress. Over the past year SAWC have been investigating the impact of ADDs on cetaceans and other non-target species. They are also considering the impact of seals on the welfare of farmed fish, and whether the balance of harms and benefits support the use of ADDs in Scottish aquaculture. The report is due before the end of 2022.

Animal welfare research

The Scottish Government Strategic Research Programme 2022-2027 started on 1st April. This includes several areas of research on animal welfare topics, mostly at SRUC:

- Precision livestock tools to improve sheep welfare: early detection of sheep scab, roundworm, mastitis. (Moredun Research Institute)
- Practical on-farm solutions for welfare and sustainability: solutions to chronic problems - evaluation of Precision Livestock Farming approaches for early warning of behaviour problems in pigs and diseases in sheep; evaluation of alternatives to farrowing crate systems; improving monitoring of nutritional management of cattle and sheep; reducing pain associated with management procedures (tail-docking, drying off); mother-offspring contact in dairy systems; male dairy calves in the value chain
- Practical on-farm solutions for positive welfare - environmental enrichment: understanding stakeholder views; inventory of enrichments for varied species and their effectiveness; assess use of enrichments; assess biological benefits of enrichment; propose actions to increase effectiveness
- EU Exit – challenges and opportunities for animal welfare; evaluate differences in welfare standards between Scotland and potential trading partners; provide evidence in support of maintaining or improving standards; monitor emerging areas and recommend policy priorities; evaluate, update, and standardise welfare measurement methods
- Solutions to improve laying hen welfare: decreasing the incidence and/or severity of feather pecking in non-cage systems; ways of reducing the prevalence of keel bone fractures; alternative free-range systems for good hen welfare during temporary housing orders
- Influencing human behaviour to improve animal welfare: Case studies of exploring why tail-docking, castration and disbudding persist; body condition scoring in beef suckler cattle; the effect of Qualitative Behavioural Assessment on stockperson behaviour; educational interventions to enhance pig stockperson behaviour; farmer mental health and its interaction with animal welfare; the framing of animal welfare in communicating to stakeholders; livestock-worrying and responsible dog ownership; public demand for animal welfare.

The Scottish Government also commissioned a literature review from SRUC on welfare issues regarding exotic animals being kept as pets to inform the current SAWC working group investigation into this area.

Scottish Government officials continue to advise on commissioning and monitoring of a number of animal welfare projects funded by Defra from a GB research requirements budget.

Advisory activity

SRUC veterinary services provide a specific farm animal welfare advisory service funded by Scottish Government. This delivers advice to Scottish Government officials on existing and potential welfare problems, promotes awareness of animal welfare requirements to livestock keepers and livestock sector organisations through publicity campaigns and supports enforcement agencies in investigating suspected cruelty/crimes involving livestock and wildlife.

4. Discussion

The specific commitments of the Programme for Government 2021-22 are commented on in section 1 of this report. In this section, SAWC gives a broader overview of progress to maintaining and enhancing the welfare of animals in Scotland through both legislative and non-legislative measures.

As was seen in the five Programmes for Government covering Session 5 of the Scottish Parliament, the number of specific commitments to animal welfare measures is growing and this is welcomed by SAWC. SAWC members are in no doubt that this reflects the high level of public concern about animal welfare and associated recognition of this by Scottish Ministers and Scottish Government officials.

As stated last year, SAWC welcomes the independence it has been accorded with regard to setting its agenda and has already been able to consider issues it considers important, in addition to those referred to it by the Scottish Ministers.

SAWC is aware of the constraints placed on government and parliamentary processes over the last two and a half years, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and congratulates the Scottish Government on following through its proposed programme of animal welfare measures. It is regrettable that the proposed Animals Abroad Bill has been dropped by the UK Government and that the Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill has not made more rapid progress in the UK parliament – particularly when the view of the Scottish Parliament, expressed in the legislative consent motion, was that these matters required legislation.

A small number of commitments in the Programmes for Government for Session 5 are still outstanding at the end of the first year of Session 6. These include regulations to cover the use of animals in public display or performance and implementation of the Werritty recommendations on grouse moor licensing. As stated in section 2 above, however, the SAWC understands that consultations are to be expected shortly.

It is also welcome that the Hunting with Dogs (Scotland) Bill to advance the Bonomy recommendations on the use of dogs to control wild mammals is well under way. SAWC believes that the Bill offers comprehensive yet proportionate protections for foxes and other wild mammals in Scotland.

We repeat our recommendation from last year regarding the Prohibited Procedures on Protected Animals (Exemptions) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2017 and the potential value of follow-up monitoring to assess the net benefits or disadvantages for animals.

5. Acknowledgment

The Commission wishes to thank members of the Scottish Government Animal Welfare and Wildlife Management teams and Marine Scotland for their assistance with the production of this report.



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