

29th March 2016

The Rt Hon Lord Bonomy, PC
2002 Act Review
Natural Resources Division
The Scottish Government
1-C North, Victoria Quay
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

Dear Lord Bonomy

Confor welcomes the opportunity on behalf of its membership to submit comment to your inquiry into the operation of the Wild Mammals Protection (Scotland) Act 2002.

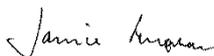
Confor is a members' organisation, funded by and accountable to businesses in the forest industries. Our aim is to promote the market for wood, forest products and forest services, and to help improve the industry's competitiveness. Confor's remit covers all parts of the industry supply chain, from nurseries through to woodland owners, timber growers, contractors, harvesters, hauliers, sawmills and other processors.

Our particular interest in your review of the legislation is in connection with the management of woodlands and specifically large scale plantation forestry.

UKFS (The UK Forestry Standard) requires forest managers to consider the impacts of forestry beyond the forest boundary. Plantations provide a safe haven for foxes and present man on his own with real problems of fox and other predator control. It is widely accepted that fox control in plantation forests can only be effectively done with a pack of foxhounds – two hounds alone as allowed in England has been shown to be inadequate in larger woods to push foxes directly to waiting guns. So in Scotland where coniferous woodland is far more common, we need the facility of a pack of hounds if we are to demonstrate that we manage forestry responsibly and as good neighbours. This is especially important when plantation forests adjoin sheep farms. The Scottish Government has targets to significantly increase the area of woodland in Scotland, and we need the goodwill of landowners, farmers and gamekeepers if the land is going to be made available for such woodland expansion.

I hope you will be able to take these points into consideration in your review, and should you wish, we can readily arrange a visit to areas of large scale commercial forestry to demonstrate the difficulties described.

Yours sincerely,



Jamie Farquhar

National Manager for Scotland
Confor

Please reply to:

Confor: Promoting forestry and wood

[Redacted contact information]