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Animal Concern incorporates the Scottish Anti-Vivisection Society which has been Campaigning for animals since 1876
E-MAIL: animals@jfrobins.force9.co.uk website: <http://www.animalconcern.org/>

To all supporters of Animal Concern, Animal Concern Advice Line and Save Our Seals Fund.

Consultation on the future of land reform in Scotland.

Hi,

Luckily one of our supporters spotted this consultation as, despite asking various Scottish Government departments to inform me of all animal and conservation related consultations, I had not been invited to respond.

This exercise in democracy and wildlife and environmental protection will take a few hours of your time so please don't start it until you have the time to complete it.

There are various ways you can participate in this consultation and you do not have to live in the countryside or in Scotland to do so. Remember that far more people visit Scotland to shoot our wonderful wildlife with a Canon or a Pentax than with a Remington or a Purdey. If you live outside Scotland mention this in your submission – you want to see all forms of native wildlife when you come to Scotland, not just the animals and birds a few other people come to kill.

The link below takes you to the 56 page consultation document and I hope you will answer at least some of the relevant questions and/or submit a letter calling for any land reform to address the problem of persecution and destruction of vast numbers of our native wild animals and birds by a very small number of people who own and “manage” vast areas of Scotland for the shooting of deer and “game”, to create artificial forests and woodlands and to graze sheep and cattle in livestock farming.

One of the most important questions being raised in this consultation is whether or not you agree that owners of “sporting” estates should have to pay business rates on their land. The answer to that is – of course they should. Why should someone making a living out of running harmless paint-ball games in a warehouse in Glasgow pay business rates while an absentee multi-millionaire or billionaire landowner who adds to their fortune by charging people money to kill wild animals be exempt?

The only people and organisations which should be exempt from business rates are those who genuinely use their land for the conservation of all native wildlife and do not indulge in wildlife “management” (culling).

Landowner federations, blood sports organisations and pseudo rural alliances will be encouraging their support groups to lobby against reforms which might force them to pay their way like everyone else or weaken their control over Scotland's wild places and the fate of the creatures which live there. Sadly many conservation groups which own large estates in Scotland are also involved in culling, especially of deer and, to a lesser extent, wild and feral goats.

If you are a member of or donate to any of the land owning conservation groups in Scotland please write to them and ask them how they intend responding to the Consultation on the future of land reform in Scotland. Ask them to back the re-introduction of business rates for sporting estates and for curbs on culling of all native species including deer, goats, small mammals and all birds. Also request a copy of their submission so that you can decide on whether or not you wish to continue supporting their work.

If you have any problems or questions about specific items on the consultation please feel free to contact me at animals@jfrobins.force9.co.uk.

Use this link to download a copy of the full 56 page consultation document, resposdee form and questionnaire.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0046/00464887.pdf>

You may find that the easiest way to complete this consultation is to download and print this document then fill the questions form, the resposdee form and then post them to Land Reform Team, B1 Spur, Saughton House, Edinburgh EH11 3XD

Once you have read it through and noted your answers for the questions you want to respond to you can go to the main resposdee document and complete it on the Government website or download it and fill in your answers offline and then send it in by e-mail. Remember to fill in the Respondent Information Form to validate your submission.

The response document and respondent form can be obtained via the link in the box headed Respondent Information Form and Consultation Questions

here: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/12/9659/downloads>

Responses to the Consultation should be e-mailed to: LandReform@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

If you don't have the time to fill in the whole document the main questions are 24, 35, and 36.

If you don't have the time to read through and complete the whole consultation please complete a Respondent Information Form (see above) and e-mail that with a short message saying that you are responding to the consultation on Scottish Land Reform and that you agree that sporting estates should pay full business rates and that you want to see an end to the mass culling of deer and the persecution of native animals which naturally predate on eggs and birds by those who want to shoot those birds in the name of sport. Ask that more be done to make it easier for the many visitors who come and see our native animals instead of giving priority to those who come to kill them.

Please forward this e-mail to any organisation you support and you think should be responding to this consultation.

Cheers 4 now,

John

PS Could you also sign this petition please?

<http://www.thepetitionsite.com/679/501/974/stop-the-uk-grey-squirrel-cull/>