



Summary of responses

Consultation on the Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards

July 2018



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Introduction

We sought views on proposals for implementing the Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards (AIHTS) in the UK. We also sought evidence on the supply, use and marking of traps. The consultation ran between 19 March 2018 and 30 April 2018. This document summarises the responses received and sets out what we plan to do next.

Introduction to the policy

The Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards (AIHTS) applies to a limited number of species in the UK (stoat, badger, otter, beaver and pine marten). Of these, the stoat is the only species that is commonly trapped in the UK.

The AIHTS requires the UK to establish appropriate processes for testing and certifying traps in accordance with the humaneness standards (“the Standards”) which are set out in the Agreement. We must prohibit the use of traps that are not certified as meeting the Standards.

The AIHTS also requires manufacturers to ‘identify’ certified traps and provide instructions for their appropriate setting, safe operation and maintenance. It also requires that trappers are trained in the humane, safe and effective use of trapping methods, including new methods as these are developed.

EU Member States are obliged to implement the requirements of the AIHTS, and the deadline for implementation was 22 July 2016. On 23 June 2016, the people of the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union. Until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the European Union and all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force.

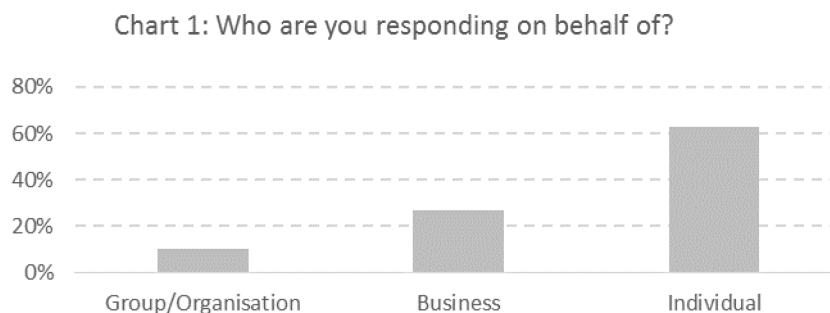
Why we were seeking comments

We sought comments on proposals to implement AIHTS as soon as practically possible using existing legislative frameworks.

We set out proposals for implementing AIHTS in the UK in order to improve the welfare of certain trapped animals and also to gather information on the supply, use and marking of traps. We wanted to understand how groups who make, sell or use traps and snares believed that they would be impacted by AIHTS and to understand the views of other interested groups and members of the public.

Numbers that responded

The consultation was completed by 384 people and organisations. Over 60% of those responding to the consultation did so on their own behalf, the remaining third of respondents were responding to the consultation on behalf of a business or membership organisation:



Approximately 4% of respondents primarily operated in either Wales or Northern Ireland, with 73% operating in England and 23% in Scotland.

Main points raised

Respondents were broadly supportive of the welfare improvements that implementing AIHTS would bring about. However, many opposed the implementation of AIHTS. There were two main reasons for this opposition:

- a) 74% of respondents were opposed to the proposed implementation date of January 2019. They believe there will not be sufficient numbers of stoat traps that comply with AIHTS available for them to purchase and install by this date.
- b) Others opposed the implementation of AIHTS because they thought it would facilitate the wider use of traps and international trade in fur.

67.1% of respondents agreed with the proposed approach to live capture traps. We proposed that the live capture trapping of stoats using AIHTS-compliant traps should be permitted under a general licence to minimise the licensing impact on both trappers and licensing authorities. Only compliant traps would be licensed; non-compliant traps would be prohibited from the proposed implementation date of January 2019.

Conversely, 68.2% disagreed with the proposed approach to lethal traps. As noted above, this was primarily due to concerns about the availability of AIHTS-compliant traps by the proposed implementation date of January 2019.

A large majority (76.2%) agreed with the proposals relating to training requirements for trap users. AIHTS requires that trappers are trained in the humane, safe and effective use of trapping methods, including new methods as these are developed. The European Commission has indicated that it is satisfied that instructions and guidance provided with traps when they are sold would meet this requirement. We proposed that licence conditions which require a trapper to follow the manufacturer's instructions for setting the trap would be sufficient to meet this AIHTS requirement.

Similarly, 77.8% of respondents agreed with the proposed trap marking requirements. How certified traps are identified, the permanency and the purpose of such a marking is not prescribed in the Agreement. We proposed that any marking needs to be permanent and be legible after years of trap service. Ideally, the marking should be stamped / embossed onto or on an ID plate permanently attached (e.g. riveted) to the trap itself.

81.6% of respondents agreed with the proposals regarding the provision of trap instructions. We proposed that instructions could be provided with the trap when purchased and should be obtainable via the manufacturer (either via the post or online).

Many respondents disagreed with the approach taken in the Impact Assessment (42%) and the conclusions of the impact assessment (51.6%). Many of those who disagreed with the Impact Assessment did so because they felt the difficulty and expense associated with purchasing and installing AIHTS-compliant traps for stoat by the proposed implementation date of January 2019 had been underestimated. However, the consultation didn't provide any further reliable data which minded government to revise its assessment.

Next steps – what the government plans to do as a result of the consultation

The government accepts the argument put forward by respondents that implementing AIHTS in January 2019 would be challenging for people who trap stoats. More time is needed for manufactures to produce compliant traps in sufficient quantities and for trap users to replace their existing traps.

We will implement AIHTS as early as possible in 2019 but include a transitional provision for stoat which delays implementation for stoat by a year. This sends a clear signal to manufacturers and traps users that they must transition to compliant traps, whilst recognising they will need time to do so.

List of organisations that responded

Angling Trust
Animal Aid
BH Sporting Ltd
Birkdale Estate
Black Mountain Farms
Blacks of Bacton
Blea Moor partnership
Blubberhouses Moor Estate Ltd
Bolton Abbey Estate
Bolton Estate
Born Free Foundation
Bowes Moor Estate
Bowland Grouse Syndicate
Bradfield Moor
Bransdale Moor
Brickyard Shoot
British Association for Shooting and Conservation
British Fur Trade Association
British Moorlands Ltd
Buccleuch Sporting , Drumlandrig Estate
Castle Hill Shoot
Catlin Estates Ltd
Cheltenham Bird Club
Coverhead Estate
Crag Estate
Crown Point Estate
Dallowgill Estate
Danby Shoot
Darley Estates
Derbyshire Constabulary
Dunlin Ltd
East Allenheads Estate
Edinglassie
Egton Estate
Estate
Fordie Estate Ltd
Forestry Commission England
Fourteenacre Ltd
Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust
Gisborough Estate Syndicate Shoot

Glemham Hall Shoot Ltd
Glenlethnot Est.
Glens shooting Syndicate
Good Knight Environmental Pest control
Greens Chartered Surveyors
Gunnarside Estate
H&G Denny
Harris & Sheldon Group Ltd
Holker
Humane Society International UK
Humberside police
Jervaulx moor
JM Osborne and Co
JMF Fenwick
Kennel Club
Killgerm Chemicals
Kirkley Hall
KM Pressings Ltd
League Against Cruel Sports
Longformacus
Longside
Lowerwoodford shoot
Moorland Association
Mosswood Group
National Anti-Snaring Campaign
National Gamekeepers Organisation
National Gamekeepers' Organisation
Natural Resources Wales
Newbibbing Hall Estate shoot
Nidderdale Pheasant Shoot
Northumberland Estates
Northumbria Police
Okeover Shoot run by Avochie Sporting
P D Carter
Pembrey Pest Control
Pennyholme Estate
Pilkington farm partnership
Plowden Estate
Respect for Animals
Rhiedorrach Estate
Roxburghe Estates
Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
Ruffside Estate

Rusca Farm
Scottish Association for Country Sports
Scottish Gamekeepers Association
Scottish Land & Estates
Scottish Wildlife Trust
Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust
Shoot Tenant
Shore Hall Estates Ltd
Snilesworth Estate
Snilesworth Estate Ltd
Sorn castle Estate
Swinton Estate
Swinton Estate Moorkeepers
Swinton Estate Pheasant Keepers
Telfit Farm Partnership
Tully Trap c/o Managed Estates
Universities Federation for Animal Welfare
Upperwood Estate
Urra Estate
Vincent Wildlife Trust
W & PLM
Walshaw Moor Estate
Wanwood Syndicate
Wemmergill Moor Ltd
Whitfield Estate
Whitfield sporting
Wild Animal Welfare Committee
Wildlife Trusts Wales
Wolfen Hall Estate
Wykeham Shoot
Yad Moss Shoot
York's Sports Ltd