



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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[REDACTED]

Your ref: 697/13
Our ref: RFI6075
Date: 8 January 2014

Dear [REDACTED]

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: : [Determining the Extent of Use and Humaneness of Snares in England and Wales](#)

Thank you for your request for information about the above research report and rabbit & fox snares which we received on 9 December 2013. We have handled your request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs). The EIRs apply to requests for environmental information, which is a broad category of information defined in regulation 2 of the EIRs. Public authorities are required to handle requests for environmental information under the EIRs. They give similar access rights to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

I have reproduced your questions below, with answers.

- 1) Explain how many times DEFRA ministers have corresponded regarding this matter? If possible provide copies of this correspondence.

[A search of our records shows we have 37 records of correspondence involving Defra Ministers on the subject of snares in 2013. Given the number of correspondence we have not provided copies, but I enclose a typical Ministerial reply.](#)

- 2) How many times has this report been discussed in parliament?

[We do not keep a tally.](#)

- 3) The report showed that the UK was not meeting its obligations under the Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards AIHTS. According to the implementation schedule, Parties to the Agreement will have until 2013 (5 years after entry into force) to test and certify trapping methods, and until 2016 to prohibit the use of traps not certified in accordance with standards of the Agreement. The Agreement was approved by [Council Decision 98/142/EC](#).



Given that the report showed UK is not meeting the trapping standards for restraining devices and that commercially available snares all breach AIHTS, please supply copies of correspondence showing that DEFRA has “tested and certified trapping methods” and informed the EU Council.

It is incorrect to say that the report showed, ‘that the UK was not meeting its obligations under the Agreement on International Humane Trapping Standards AIHTS’. The AIHTS only applies to traps used for certain species. The fox and rabbit which the report reported on are not covered by the AIHTS, therefore fox and rabbit snares are not subject to the AIHTS.

4) Given the timescale of 2016 before the UK will have to prohibit non certified traps, please supply correspondence with manufactures on proposed changes to design,

As stated above fox and rabbit snares are not subject to the AIHTS.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the EIRs, and in keeping with the government’s Transparency Agenda, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. Therefore, the information released to you will now be published on www.gov.uk together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. Please note that this will not include your personal data.

I attach Annex A, which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you.

I also attach Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me.

Yours

[Redacted signature block]

Annex A

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Annex B

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 18 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Mike Kaye, Head of Information Standards, Area 4D, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: requestforinfo@defra.gsi.gov.uk) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our [website](#).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
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