

Rob Gibson
Convenor Rural Affairs, Environment and Climate Change Committee
Committee Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP



1 September 2015

Dear Rob

You will have seen the publication today of the Programme for Government in which we give notice of our intention to review the operation of the Protection of Wild Mammals (Scotland) Act 2002.

You will also have noted the debate around the issue of foxhunting over the summer following the Westminster Government's stated intention to amend the legislation in England and Wales. This debate also brought our legislation into sharp focus, particularly in relation to the extent to which the requirements of the 2002 Act are observed by practitioners. We have already taken some steps in relation to this matter.

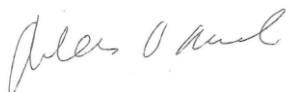
First, Scottish Ministers have raised with the Chief Constable of Police Scotland the concerns about enforcement that the League Against Cruel Sports Scotland raised recently with MSPs. The Chief Constable agreed to look into the matter.

Second, I have decided to include a section on breaches of the 2002 Act in the forthcoming Scottish Government wildlife crime annual report, which the RACCE Committee, as before, will have the opportunity to consider. I would be happy to discuss the report with the Committee should it decide to hear evidence.

Third, as is set out in the Programme for Government we intend to undertake a review of the 2002 Act and to consult on the findings thereafter.

I trust that this update is helpful. I will continue to keep the Committee informed of any further developments.

Kind regards



AILEEN MCLEOD

