



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

By email only

**Robbie Kernahan,
Director of Sustainable Growth,
NatureScot**

**Net Zero, Energy and Transport
Committee**

c/o Clerk to the Committee
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

netzero.committee@Parliament.Scot

25 April 2022

Dear Mr Kernahan,

Translocate Protected Beavers to Reduce Licensed Killing (PE1815)

At its [meeting on 15 March 2022](#), the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee considered petition 1815 - Translocate Protected Beavers to Reduce Licensed Killing following recent updates from the petitioner and exchanges of correspondence after the first consideration of the petition on 30 November 2021.

Members agreed to seek further information from NatureScot and the Scottish Government on issues raised in their responses. [Read the Official report for the meeting on 15 March 2022.](#)

The petitioner, Trees for Life, has expressed concern that the lack of application of hierarchy of control methods means beavers are being treated differently from other protected species. [Read the petitioner's update in annexe B of the clerk's paper for the meeting on 15 March 2022.](#)

We invite you to respond to this by referring to the licensing criteria applied for other species subject to control.

Your letter of January 2022 states that NatureScot is already actively promoting the use of trapping for translocation rather than lethal control and trapping is the 'preferred option' but that some license holders experience barriers to using trapping.

We would welcome you elaborating on what the barriers are and how they can be overcome. We would also welcome your views on what is realistic in terms of "increasing the proportion" of beavers "trapped as opposed to controlled" and by when.

You also indicated you would be setting out details of funding available for translocation projects in early 2022. More information on the funding made available for these projects and the projects' estimated impact on the proportion of beavers "trapped as opposed to controlled" would be useful.

We would further appreciate a link to the interim guidance on the beaver management policy highlighted in your letter.

Finally, you stated in your letter that the process of issuing new licences accompanied by statements of reasons was underway following the judicial review verdict. The petitioner has highlighted concerns about the process followed in issuing this statement of reasons, including relying on the applicant's assessment of damage to the property caused by beavers. The Committee requests details of the process followed by NatureScot to assess licence applications and whether this includes independent assessment of the damage caused.

The Committee would appreciate a response by 23 May 2022.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dean Lockhart".

Dean Lockhart MSP
Convener
Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee