



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Mairi Gougeon MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs,
Land Reform and Islands
Scottish Government

Rural Affairs and Islands Committee
c/o Clerk to the Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

rural.committee@parliament.scot

By email only

12 June 2023

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Rural Affairs and Islands remit evidence session

Thank you for giving evidence on the Rural Affairs and Islands portfolio remit to the Committee at its meeting on 31 May 2023.

The Committee agreed to write to you for a written response to a number of questions that we did not have time to discuss with you during the evidence session. In addition, there were several subjects on which you offered to provide further information to the Committee. The Committee would be grateful to receive further information in relation to—

- the timescales for the inshore fisheries management commitments in the Bute House agreement with regard to the inshore fisheries cap, review of scallop entitlements, and vessel tracking and monitoring;
- the progress made on the consultation analysis of the Future Catching Policy and remote electronic monitoring, and the timescales for legislation in relation to these;
- whether the Scottish Government has received recommendations from the Programme Board on the proposed Scottish Veterinary Service, and the timetable for progressing this work;
- how much progress has been made towards the Scottish Government's commitment to consult on legislation to extend the framework for the licensing of activities involving animals, and what specific activities are being considered for licensing;
- the timescales for the commencement of key sections of the Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act, specifically the publication of a national Good Food Nation Plan and the establishment of a Scottish Food Commission;

- the changes that have been made to the operating structure of Marine Scotland, whether the structure will be changed in the future, and the impact of those changes on engagement with the fishing and aquaculture industry;
- when the £33 million that was removed from the budget allocated toward agriculture can be expected to be returned; and
- a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis on the challenges faced by farmers and crofters in Scotland

The Official Report of the 31 May evidence session is available on [the Parliament's website](#).

The Committee would welcome a response by Friday 28 July 2023.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Finlay Carson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Finlay Carson MSP
Convener, Rural Affairs and Islands Committee