

# Wildlife activists celebrate sale of estate

Landowner who once claimed to be targeted over dead birds of prey sells Glenogil. By Mark Macaskill

A WEALTHY landowner who once claimed he was targeted by police and wildlife campaigners after a rare bird of prey was found dead on his Scottish estate has quietly sold up.

John Dodd, the co-founder of the Edinburgh-based Artemis investment bank and hedge fund, has sold the 10,000-acre Glenogil estate in the Angus Glens to Baron Ferdinand von Baumbach, believed to be from Germany.

The property, regarded as one of Scotland's finest grouse shooting estates, was at the centre of wildlife crime allegations for a number of years.

In 2008, Dodd was stripped of more than £100,000 of farming subsidies after illegal pesticides were discovered on Glenogil in 2006.

In the same year, the body of a white-tailed eagle was discovered decomposing on the estate boundary. In 2009, a white-tailed sea eagle was found dead on the estate, killed by a toxic,

illegal pesticide. At the time, Dodd, who denied responsibility for the bird deaths — and has never been prosecuted for wildlife offences — said that his staff felt “constantly targeted”.

Last week, sources close to Dodd, who bought Glenogil in 2004, said that his decision to sell the estate was for “personal reasons” and was not linked to the controversy surrounding the birds of prey.

Dodd declined to comment on the matter, but wildlife campaigners said they were “delighted” to hear of the sale. “We hope that if the new owner intends to maintain the land as a driven grouse moor he does so in a sustainable and lawful manner,” said a spokesman for Raptor Persecution Scotland, an online blog.

“We will continue to monitor the activities of this estate for some time, regardless of the



new owner, until we see a recovery in the breeding success of raptors that should inhabit this area.”

Jennifer Dunn, a spokeswoman for the League Against Cruel Sports, said: “There have been a lot of problems around Glenogil and we hope the new owner will work very hard to protect wildlife in the area.”

Dodd, who sold his stake in Artemis for a reported £50m, is credited with turning Glenogil into a highly regarded grouse shooting estate, but his reputation has been badly tarnished by the allegations of bird persecution.

Ministers slashed his farming subsidy by £107,000, the largest financial penalty meted out under farming legislation, following a 2006 police raid, when pesticides were found on a dead pigeon laid out