

Ministear airson na h-Àrainneachd agus Atharrachadh Aimsir  
Minister for Environment and Climate Change  
Paul Wheelhouse BPA/MSP

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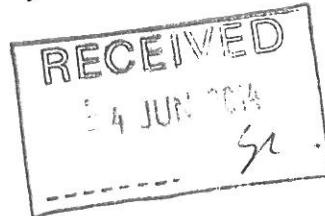
In 2014 Scotland Welcomes the World



LEGACY 2014  
XX COMMONWEALTH GAMES



GLENEAGLES  
GOLF & RESORTS



Our ref: 2014/0013780

23 May 2014

*Dear Duncan*

Thank you for your letter of 12 May.

I can well appreciate that recent events such as the poisoning of so many red kites and buzzards in Ross-shire as well as the suspicious disappearance of the young satellite-tagged sea eagle in the Park itself has prompted many people to question how and why such archaic and cruel criminal activities can persist in modern Scotland.

These crimes affect not only some of our rarest species and the ecosystems which they are a part of, but also our national reputation as a country which cares for and values the natural environment. Many businesses in the Cairngorms National Park will depend on that reputation, to attract visitors from throughout Britain and overseas, and also as part of the Scottish brand that supports high quality food and drink exports.

I was pleased that the debate in the Parliament on 6 May provided the opportunity for MSPs from all sides to unite in condemning illegal raptor persecution, and also to highlight the work that the Scottish Government has been doing in this area. As you will know there are measures coming into play now such as the first prosecution under the vicarious liability provisions as well as a number of new measures that are being put in place. These include the review of penalties for wildlife crime; the use by the police of the full range of investigative techniques; and, restrictions on the use of General Licences by land managers in areas where it is suspected that wildlife crime may be taking place. I have also been clear that we will be prepared to go further if it is necessary, including looking at the licensing of certain types of shooting businesses.

As you note, representatives from the Cairngorms National Park have been involved in the work of PAW Scotland as have numerous individuals and NGOs that live and work in the Park. However I am in full agreement with your proposal that now is the time to bring together stakeholders in the Cairngorms National Park to combine our efforts to eradicate

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raptor persecution and celebrate the Cairngorms as one of the best places in Scotland for raptors and nature.

I would be delighted to attend an inaugural meeting. My diary secretary will be in touch with your office to find a suitable date.

*Kindest regards*



**PAUL WHEELHOUSE**

Mr Byden,

Please accept my apologies that you did not receive this letter sooner. It got mixed in with other correspondence. It should have been issued last week.

kindest regards.

Kinda Muney

AP Secretary - Mr Wheelhorse 3<sup>rd</sup> June 14.

