



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

***By email only***

**Mairi McAllan MSP, Minister for  
Environment and Land Reform**

**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](mailto:netzero.committee@Parliament.Scot)

05 May 2022

Dear Minister,

### **Independent Monitoring of Satellite tags fitted to raptors (PE 1750)**

At its [meeting on 15 March 2022](#), the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee considered the above petition. The petition calls on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to introduce independent monitoring of satellite tags fitted to raptor species, to assist the police and courts in potential wildlife crime cases and to provide data transparency.

Members agreed to seek further information from the Scottish Government to progress the petition. [Read the Official report for the meeting on 15 March 2022.](#)

The Committee agreed to seek views on whether the changes made following the recommendations of the Grouse Moor Management Review Group in their [report to the Scottish Government published in November 2019](#) have led to more robust and trustworthy data on disappeared or dead birds of prey as well as more effective sharing of this data.

In its [response to the review in November 2020](#), the Scottish Government stated that

“despite clear and repeated messages from Scottish Ministers that such activity is entirely unacceptable, raptor persecution continues to be a significant and ongoing issue in Scotland.”

It therefore agreed that a licensing scheme should be introduced and implemented earlier than the five-year timeframe suggested by the Review Group.

We note that NatureScot agreed new data-sharing protocols for all permit holders who wish to employ satellite-based tracking of tagged raptors birds and that these protocols would be in place for the start of the 2021 tagging season.

We also note the Scottish Government agreed these new protocols would meet the requirements recommended by the Review Group in its report, including that Police Scotland should expeditiously process shared data and associated information to determine whether it warrants referral to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

We have written to NatureScot and Police Scotland to ask for updates on the implementation and performance of the new data-sharing protocols in the first year of the satellite tagging scheme.

We would welcome the Scottish Government's views whether there has been an improvement in the robustness of data collected and the sharing of data by license holders since the changes in protocols were implemented in 2021 following the Review Group's report, and whether this is likely to lead to more effective prosecutions.

We would appreciate a response by 01 June 2022.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dean Lockhart', is centered below the text 'Yours sincerely,'.

Dean Lockhart MSP  
Convener  
**Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee**