

Your name
Your address

The Rt Hon David Cameron MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
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Date

Dear Mr Cameron

Badger Cull - a costly mistake that won't solve TB in cattle

I felt compelled to write to you as I find it incomprehensible that the Environment Secretary is continuing to claim his cull policy is science-led, yet the scientific legitimacy of culling badgers has been relentlessly questioned by highly respected scientists, conservationists and Government bodies.

- The pilot culls have proven to be an utter shambles - a complete waste of time and money.
- DEFRA promised robust monitoring of the pilot culls but this was not the case. The vast majority of shooting took place without any monitoring whatsoever.
- Only a fraction of badger carcasses were collected for examination to determine whether the killing was humane, and the extreme suffering of wounded badgers dying underground is unmeasurable.
- The Government's Chief Vet, Nigel Gibbens revealed that DEFRA did not have definitive criteria in place to measure and assess whether the pilot culls were safe, humane and effective. Also, there's insufficient data available as the number of badgers killed was far too low.
- Despite this, and the lack of scientific evidence to support a cull, the decision about whether the trials were safe, effective and humane will ultimately rest with Ministers!

In my opinion, DEFRA has bowed to pressure from the farming community who demanded something is done. DEFRA is using badgers as a convenient scapegoat to keep the farmers happy, rather than facing the challenge of implementing the fundamental changes to cattle farming that are necessary to get bTB under control.

I support Naturewatch in its call for the Government to adopt a genuinely science-led policy, the only long-term, effective solution to combat TB in cattle. I urge the Government to focus its resources on preventing the transmission of the disease on farms through improved bio security to keep cattle and badgers apart, including measures to keep badgers out of farm buildings and feed stores, limiting the transfer of TB between cattle, and making swift progress towards producing fully functional vaccines for both badgers (oral) and cattle.

I believe that continuing to ignore the views of scientists, wildlife experts, and the public will do irreparable damage to the Government - common sense must prevail before it's too late.

I thank you in advance for your attention to this important matter.

Yours sincerely

Your signature
Print your name