

This is a really critical moment for beavers in Scotland and you can help things go the beavers' way.

Soon the legislation allowing beavers to remain in Scotland will be debated in the Scottish Parliament. Before that can happen, the Scottish Government is obliged to issue a report and hold a public consultation on the conclusions of that report. The report was issued in December 2017 and the consultation is now underway.

The Cabinet Secretary for the Environment indicated in 2016 that she is “minded” to allow beavers to remain in Scotland. However, the final decision is not a forgone conclusion, and she may well be influenced by the results of the consultation and the subsequent debate in Parliament. If you want beavers to remain in Scotland, please could you contribute your views to the 5 questions in the consultation which can be found at the following link:

<https://consult.gov.scot/forestry/beavers-in-scotland/>

The deadline date for receiving responses is 6 March 2018 – and the more of us who reply positively, then the more likely the Cabinet Secretary will be persuaded to stick to her initial decision to allow beavers to stay. As we have seen in the press recently, those who are opposed to beaver's presence in Scotland can be very vocal – and we need to make our voices heard.

The government report on beavers in Scotland is technical and lengthy. So to make responding to the 5 questions easier, we set out below a summary of the answers that Scottish Wild Beaver Group has provided to the consultation. You should of course, feel free to respond to the questions as you see fit. If you feel uncomfortable or unqualified to answer any particular question, we suggest you just leave it blank.

Please help us to keep beavers in Scotland – by responding to the Consultation by 6 March.

Question 1

Do you agree with the re-introduction policy and that the Environmental Report has correctly identified the potential impacts and appropriate mitigation?

-Yes ✓

-No

-Unsure

Please explain your answer

We strongly agree that beaver populations in Scotland should be allowed to remain, and that beavers should receive strong legal protection.

Beaver bring many benefits such as flood risk reduction, improved water quality and increased biodiversity.

In addition their presence has socio-economic benefits (such as ecotourism potential)

Beavers should be actively managed to reduce any negative effects on farmers, but culling should only ever be a very last resort after all other mitigation methods have been exhausted

Question 2

What are your views on the evidence set out in the Environmental Report that has been used to inform the assessment process?

-Very positive

-Positive ✓

-Neutral

-Negative

-Very Negative

Please give details of additional relevant sources:

The evidence contained Environmental Report is generally detailed and thorough.

Question 3

What are your views on the predicted environmental effects as set out in the Environmental Report?
See page 15 and Section 4

-Very positive

-Positive ✓

-Neutral

-Negative

-Very Negative

Please explain your answer

The report's findings on the predicted environmental effects of beaver reintroduction are generally comprehensive and well-reasoned.

Question 4

Are there any other environmental effects that have not been considered?

The creation of riparian buffer zones (involving beaver dams) could potentially provide a critical solution to combatting agricultural run-off pollution in intensively farmed areas.

Question 5

Please provide any other comments you have on the environmental report

The environmental Report has correctly identified the potential impacts and appropriate mitigation – but it will be critical to see how the identified mitigation measures are implemented in practice, that sufficient funding is made available for beaver management, and that any evidence of wildlife crime involving beavers is swiftly investigated and prosecuted