

## **NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA STATEMENT**

1 June 2017

### **National Trust for Scotland welcomes decisive Scottish Government action on raptor persecution**

Scotland's largest conservation charity, the National Trust for Scotland has welcomed decisive action taken by Roseanna Cunningham, Cabinet Secretary for the Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform.

This was in response to a damning report from Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) which showed that 41 out of 131 satellite-tagged golden eagles died in suspicious circumstances. There was strong correlation to areas of intensively managed grouse moors.

The National Trust for Scotland's Head of Natural Heritage Conservation Policy, Stuart Brooks said:

"We welcome the establishment of an independent review of the environmental impact of grouse moor management and the potential to regulate practises within a licensing system.

"As a significant custodian and manager of upland estates, we at the National Trust for Scotland look forward to contributing to the package of review and research measures."

The measures outlined by Scottish Government are designed to increase protection for birds of prey, the wider environment and the reputation of those who abide by the law and include:

- Setting up an independently-led group to look at the environmental impact of grouse moor management practices such as muirburn, the use of medicated grit and mountain hare culls, and to recommend options for regulation including licensing and other measures which could be put in place without new primary legislation;
- Immediately reviewing all available legal measures which could be used to target geographical areas of concern;
- Increasing resources for the detection and investigation of wildlife crime and work with Police Scotland to pilot the use of special constables in the Cairngorms National Park;
- Ruling out giving the Scottish SPCA more investigative powers, in light of legal advice;
- Examining how best to protect the valuable role of gamekeepers in rural Scotland;
- Commissioning research into the costs and benefits of large shooting estates to Scotland's economy and biodiversity.

