

P-05-743 End the Exotic Pet Trade in Wales – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 22.10.18

Dear Kayleigh,

Thank you so much for your recent correspondence inviting me to further add to the debate on the trade in Exotic Pets in Wales. I would therefore like the Petitions Committee to consider the following.

Please see this recent article from The Independent, April 19, 2018, which supports the evidence of illegal poaching for the supply of the Exotic Pet Trade. My contention is that the Wales Government should in the first instance guarantee the effectiveness and compliance of its existing sovereign and UK wide legislation apropos the regulation of the keeping of Exotic Animals kept as Pets in Wales, and secondly, consider the total banning of the keeping of Wild Animals as Pets in Wales due to the difficulty in guaranteeing the former, in that the existing legislation and the policing of it are inadequate to prevent the current suffering of Wild Animals kept in Unnatural domestic environments (including fish tanks and cages), so that, accordingly, the Trade in Exotic Pets does not meet the welfare standards of a progressive country like Wales and should therefore be banned.

https://www.independent.co.uk/news/long_reads/illegal-exotic-pet-trade-captive-bred-wild-born-snakes-a8298086.html

You will no doubt be aware that the UK Government hosted an international conference on the illegal wildlife trade (IWT) in London 11-12 October 2018. Please see the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/london-conference-on-the-illegal-wildlife-trade-2018>

The following are quotes from the Government's press release for the conference, and from the Government report of the conference itself:

The illegal wildlife trade, too often seen only as an environmental issue, is conducted on an industrial and transnational scale.

The illegal wildlife trade (IWT) not only endangers some of our most iconic species of wildlife, but is a serious organised crime and damages the livelihoods of some of the world's poorest communities.

The illegal wildlife trade is an urgent global issue, which not only threatens some of the world's most iconic species with extinction, but also damages sustainable economic growth and the livelihoods of vulnerable people in rural communities. It's worth up to £17 billion per year and is the fourth most lucrative transnational crime after drugs, weapons and human trafficking. The criminals who run this trade do more than damage wildlife – they use networks of corrupt officials and agencies to undermine sustainable development and the rule of law, damaging the livelihood and growth of local communities.

Urgent, united action by the international community is vital to tackle illegal trade and end wildlife crime.

Tackling the illegal wildlife trade remains an urgent global issue. It contributes to dramatic declines in the populations of many protected species, found across all continents, increasing the number of endangered species. Demand for illegal flora and fauna products spans multiple species and market drivers, and these pressures on wildlife populations are additional to, but not limited to, other pressures such as increasing human populations, change of land-use, pollution and changing environmental conditions. The illegal wildlife trade is often a highly organised, sophisticated criminal activity that is taking place on an industrial scale. (From the Declaration)

The illegal wildlife trade is also a great threat to national and regional security, resulting in cross-border incursions with networks that support it often being the same as those that enable money-laundering, weapons, drugs and human trafficking including modern slavery.

The illegal trade in wildlife is severely impacting many species that are already threatened with extinction, as well as pushing other species into the endangered category. It fuels corruption which creates insecurity and undermines the rule of law, hampering opportunities for economic growth. Sustainable management of natural resources can contribute to the conservation of vital habitat and maintain the integrity of ecosystems, whilst engaging local communities, generating decent jobs and serving to combat the illegal wildlife trade. (From Declaration)

We recognise the need for involvement and action of Government Ministries and agencies as well as sub-national authorities beyond those focused on the environment or nature conservation in order to address the systemic and criminal factors facilitating and benefiting from the illegal wildlife trade.

We recognise the need to address demand for illegal wildlife products. Until now, the resource and effort spent globally on reducing demand for illegally traded

wildlife and wildlife products has been small in comparison to other types of intervention.

To end the illegal wildlife trade, it is imperative that any steps taken to tackle the demand for these products are based on evidence and built on best practice. We recognise the importance of research to understand market drivers so that effectiveness can be increased. We also recognise the need to tailor research to the specific drivers of illegal use of a species or product. Similarly, we recognise the need for greater investment in tools, data analysis and funding. We welcome steps taken by countries and organisations to understand and target specific drivers in demand reduction campaigns and commit to learning from these examples, sharing best practice and evaluating impact. We recognise the powerful impact of government-led behaviour change campaigns, and welcome efforts by countries to increase these campaigns in order to reduce demand for illegally traded wildlife and wildlife products.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/declaration-london-conference-on-the-illegal-wildlife-trade-2018>

THUS, IT IS BEHOLDEN ON THE WALES GOVERNMENT TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST THE TRADE IN EXOTIC PETS IN WALES, AS IT IS AMORAL AND HAS NO PLACE IN A SOCIETY GOVERNED BY THE RULE OF LAW AND PROGRESSIVE VALUES.

Please see below examples of Exotic Pets for sale in Wales. Please remember that there is no guarantee that these Wild Animals were bred in captivity, a business itself which should cause great concern for all the reasons stated above.

<https://www.freeads.co.uk/wales/buy-sell/pets/other-pets/#.W8dYDWhKjIU>

<https://www.freeads.co.uk/uk/buy-sell/pets/other-pets/35009988/royal-python-/view#.W8dYaWhKjIU>

<https://www.freeads.co.uk/uk/buy-sell/pets/other-pets/34884115/2-frilled-dragons-male-and-female-pair/view#.W8dYvWhKjIU>

<https://www.gumtree.com/exotics/wales>

<https://www.gumtree.com/p/reptiles/giant-cuban-knight-anoles-x2/1317581767>

Thank you for this valuable opportunity to air these concerns about the Trade in Exotic (Wild) animals as Pets. I look forward to your further consideration of the issues therein.

Best regards

David Sedley