

26 June 2014

Amanda Anderson
Director
The Moorland Association
16 Castle Park
Lancaster
LA1 1YG

Dear Ms Anderson

The RSPB has always sought to work with the sport shooting community to create grouse moors that are environmentally sustainable and provide a safe home for birds of prey and other threatened species. For example, the Langholm Moor Demonstration Project in Southwest Scotland has allowed us to devise and test out practical solutions to the hen harrier-grouse issue. We are also working with moorland managers in Wales, Northern Ireland, and Northern England to secure truly sustainable grouse moors.

However, we don't see a collective will within the grouse shooting community to improve the stewardship of our upland habitats.

There is evidence that birds of prey continue to be persecuted, impacting on their populations, and many important sites for wildlife are being damaged or destroyed by intensive management activities such as inappropriate burning. Intensification is increasing and it is clear that many in the industry are moving further away from common ground with conservation interests.

This has to stop.

This is why we have today called on political parties to introduce, after the next election, a robust licensing system to govern grouse moor management to deliver environmental outcomes.

We believe that this law-abiding, environmentally sustainable grouse shoots would have nothing to fear from new regulation and would benefit from improved public confidence in the sustainability of their sport. But the public will not stomach the continued destruction of our natural heritage and it is clear that grouse shooting must change.

I call on you to support the introduction of a modern regulatory regime for driven grouse shooting in England to help protect our amazing upland wildlife, restore our internationally important peatlands, and return the magnificent hen harrier to its rightful place in the sky above.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Mike Clarke
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working to give nature a home around the world.