

# **STOP THE GREENWASH NATURESCOT! YOU NEED TO GET REAL ON BEAVER TRANSLOCATION**

*Friday 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2021*

The Argaty beaver release story is good news - but only a tiny step in the right direction. It is not nearly enough according to 21 distinguished environmentalists and commentators who have sent an open letter to Scottish ministers calling on the government to open up beaver translocation across Scotland.

As COP26 draws to a close in Glasgow, under a barrage of accusations of greenwash and “blah blah blah”, NatureScot congratulates itself for giving a single license for beaver translocation to a farm in Stirlingshire, merely five miles from the nearest wild beaver population. And it does so after subjecting the farmer to almost a year’s worth of bureaucratic hurdles. NatureScot have emphasised that this latest translocation is “at edge of existing range” although the release is clearly occurring in a river catchment in which beavers are already present. The fact remains that most of Scotland’s potential beaver habitat remains closed-off to beavers until this poorly thought-through prohibition is lifted.

The impressive line-up of distinguished environmentalists, academics, commentators and celebrities who have signed the open letter to Scottish Ministers are calling for all suitable habitat in Scotland to be made potentially available for the translocation of beavers from conflict zones now.

In contrast to the barriers that are being put in the way of translocation requests, Tayside farmers have in the past been able to get a license to kill beavers just by lifting the phone and stating their land-classification. 87 Tayside beavers were shot under government license in 2019/2020 and another 115 in 2020/2021.

This is in spite of the fact that NatureScot have estimated that there are over 105,000 hectares of “suitable beaver woodland habitat” all across Scotland.

NatureScot's own press statement make it clear that, despite having been found by the court of Session to have 'erred in law' in the issuing licenses, they intend to carry on much as before and merely amend existing licences.

Andrew Thompson, a Scottish Wild Beaver Group trustee said *"It's encouraging that so many distinguished voices are calling out the prohibition on translocation to new river catchments. Public patience is running out with a government policy which pushes farmers into lethal control applications, and which fails to grasp the seriousness of the biodiversity crisis"*.