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## **Deer Management Policy**

Thank you for allowing me to submit my feelings on how the deer problems could be confronted in my neighbourhood

The public consultation that you undertook I feel left a lot of questions unanswered. It is a long paper but with little substance.

My comments are only in connection with the wild deer population of Ireland and in my area of South Wicklow.

I am concerned that you have nobody on the group that is outside the civil service or semi-state bodies. I see from the end of the report that you have identified a large number of groups and individuals but they are not a member of your group. Why is this so? I feel that this is a very big mistake in that the people you have appointed will have a jaundice view of the problems. Landowners, locals and deer hunters should in my opinion should be consulted and be a member of the group with a view of keeping these wild animals under control.

Developing a deer hunting tourist business which could become a very self-sustaining business, allowing for employment of many people in the rural community should become a matter of urgency. It has been done in other countries like Scotland and has resulted in a sizable number employed.

There is one man that should have been appointed as he is an experienced person with very good knowledge of the deer problem in Ireland. This man is Ben Mc Cabe. But I suppose now that I have mentioned him, will result in his death knell. Ben has local knowledge of the deer problem and has some very good ideas on how to contain it. I found him very keen to help with good ideas on how to combat these animals.

Where I live I have a major problem with the deer population. They do incredible damage to my vegetable garden. It would be impossible to fence the area as these animals can jump up to ten feet high. I totally agree with your statement that the “Policy should support a public information / education programme on the need for deer management and control”. If this could be managed then it would go a long way in solving the problems. A number of local farmers are finding that the deer are a problem that is costing money.

To me there should be no set times that deer can be culled especially in the Wicklow area as the population of deer has gone out of control. The culling of the deer should be allowed all year round, especially those animals in areas that have damage done to the crops. By agreeing with this idea it could go a long way in helping to solve the problem.

Those people in your department should consult the all the stakeholders concerned, by holding local meetings in the areas that have deer problems. This would allow for these people to have their say in how the problems are solved. You state in the paper that changes to the existing legislation may be needed to allow the deer hunting to be brought into current thinking. You know as well as I do changes can take an awful long time.

To me it is extremely important that that any decisions taken must take into account all the stakeholders. I don't want to see a situation where the few rule the many. All the ideas should be examined and proposal put forward to solve the deer problem in Ireland. As you say in your paper there is no deer management in Ireland and the damage that they do to the local habitat is now very serious. Deer are breeding is out of control and a serious culling program show now take place to avoid future problems.

I believe that the time has come in that a dynamic program has to be put in place so as to allow for the best value to be obtained from these animals. Wild deer are as you say part of the biodiversity that requires the habitat to be looked after to overcome the damage that the deer are the cause off.

I feel I have put enough of my thoughts of how your group should be put together and hopefully some will be acted upon.

Michael Goss. BSc. MSc.