

29 April, 2016

Summary of a response made to Wildcat Haven about wildcat conservation work

A meeting was held at Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) on 16 March 2016 with Wildcat Haven and their lawyers from Clifford Chance.

A representative from the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland was also present at the meeting. At the meeting, Wildcat Haven raised concerns about the Scottish Wildcat Conservation Action Plan, a multi-partner project chaired by Scottish Natural Heritage. They subsequently sent a supporting document, and posted a summary of this online on the 2nd April 2016.

SNH has now responded to this detailed document. A summary of the main points is outlined below, and a link to the response is included in light of the considerable interest in the detail of this work.

In summary:

- After careful consideration of the document sent by Wildcat Haven on 18 March, we are content that legal, ethical and scientific issues which have been raised regarding the Scottish Wildcat Conservation Action Plan have been fully and properly addressed.
- Wildcat Haven has made a number of inaccurate statements in their document and do not take into account more recent research, but instead, refer to historical discussions from Scottish Wildcat Action Steering Group meetings.
- Wildcat Haven appears to have significantly misunderstood the work currently being undertaken to deliver the Scottish Wildcat Conservation Action Plan. Conservation efforts to save Scottish wildcats are essential, and urgent. We would encourage Wildcat Haven to work constructively with others parties as antagonistic debate in the media is damaging legitimate conservation efforts to save the Scottish wildcat.
- To date, Wildcat Haven has presented limited information on their work and we have requested information on the methodologies and approaches they are using to assist with informed debate on wildcat conservation. A request for information from Wildcat Haven has been made.
- We wish to focus our efforts now on our ongoing positive wildcat conservation. Should substantive information be forthcoming, along with a commitment to a science-led and constructive approach to the conservation of the Scottish wildcat, then we will seek opportunities for further engagement with Wildcat Haven.