Consultation launched on the import and export of hunting trophies

The Government today (Saturday 2 November) launched a consultation on options to restrict the imports and exports of hunting trophies to the UK – including a potential ban.

The consultation, alongside a call for evidence, will allow ministers to understand the public's views on all sides of the debate and gather expert evidence to inform any next steps.

The 12-week consultation will close on Saturday 25 January 2020. The four main options being consulted on are:

- A ban on the import and export of hunting trophies from certain species
- Stricter requirements to demonstrate clear benefits to conservation and local communities before hunting trophies from certain species are permitted to enter or leave the UK
- A ban on all hunting trophies entering or leaving the UK
- Continuing to apply current controls based on internationally agreed rules.

Launching the consultation, International Environment Minister Zac Goldsmith said:

> The UK is a nation of animal lovers, and there is a great strength of feeling around the issue of trophy hunting. I'm pleased we are able to launch this consultation today to address the import and export of hunting trophies.

There are a number of controls already in place on the import and export of hunting trophies. The UK Government will not issue an import permit for a trophy unless the importer can show there has been no detrimental impact on the endangered species and the trophy has been obtained from a sustainable hunting operation.

All applications for import permits for trophies are individually scrutinised by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), as the UK's CITES Scientific Authority, to determine there has been no detrimental impact on endangered species and the trophy has been obtained from a 'sustainable' hunting operation.

Net Zero Review launched to support UK's world leading climate commitment

The Net Zero Review, the first of its kind, will assess how the UK can maximise economic growth opportunities from its transformation to a green economy.

At its heart is a priority to ensure a fair balance of contributions from all those that will benefit, including considering how to reduce costs for low income households.

This review is a major step towards the UK achieving net zero emissions by 2050, after becoming the world's first major economy to legislate to do so earlier this year.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sajid Javid, said:

> The UK is leading the way on tackling climate change as the first major economy to legislate for net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. We must all play a part in protecting the planet for future generations.
>
> This review is a vital next step in delivering that commitment, ensuring that we can end our contribution to global warming, while supporting growth and balancing costs, to avoid placing unfair burdens on families or businesses.

The review will also consider how to ensure we can cut our emissions without seeing them exported elsewhere. Everyone will have an important role in making the transition successful. The Treasury will consult widely, drawing on evidence from experts, as well as those that will be impacted.

A final report will be published in autumn 2020, ahead of the UK hosting the UN climate change conference in Glasgow in November next year.

Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury, Simon Clarke said:

> I have championed the environment throughout my life and political career so its humbling to launch this unprecedented review into how we end the UK's contribution to climate change.
>
> Until recently people said that Net Zero was impossible, but this work is a giant step towards making it happen, enabling us to set out a roadmap for an economy that is cleaner, more efficient, and works for everyone, while preserving our planet.

Further information

Terms of reference for the Net Zero Review have been published.

On 27 June the UK became the first major economy in the world to legislate to end its contribution to global warming by 2050, increasing the ambition of our commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions under the Climate Change Act 2008.

Between 1990 and 2017, the UK reduced its emissions by 42% while growing the economy by more than two thirds, and according to independent analysis from PwC, we reduced the carbon intensity of our economy faster than any other G20 country since 2000.

This review will complement existing government achievements on climate change, including:

- quadrupling UK Renewable capacity since 2010. Low-carbon energy rose to just over 50% of our electricity generation in 2018 – a record high
- installing 2.5 million energy efficiency measures in 2 million homes – saving carbon and delivering net household bills savings of £800 million each year
- significant investment through the Clean Growth Strategy including £4.5 billion to support development of renewable and low carbon heating through the Renewable Heat Incentive
- investing nearly £1.5 billion to support uptake in electric vehicles, including up to £78 million to support innovation in electric motor technology, and using the tax system to encourage the uptake of cars with low carbon dioxide emissions
- pledging a £315 million fund at Budget 2018 to support businesses with high energy use to: cut their bills and emissions through increased energy efficiency and reduce their emissions by decarbonising industrial processes

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Heavy industry to cut 2 million tonnes of carbon emissions with new tech

- £315 million to help energy intensive industries reduce power bills and lower carbon emissions
- companies to save up to £1 billion a year in energy bills by 2030 by dramatically improving the energy efficiency of commercial buildings
- British businesses account for a quarter of all UK greenhouse gas emissions

The government is on the hunt for the most effective ways to help cut industrial greenhouse gas emissions, as part of a £315 million investment drive in decarbonising heavy industry to help reach net zero by 2050.

The government last week set out plans to drastically improve the energy efficiency of commercial buildings, with businesses set to benefit by saving up to £1 billion a year on their energy bills by 2030. This includes improving the energy performance of rented commercial buildings and setting a minimum energy efficiency standard of Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) band B by 2030.

The Industrial Energy Transformation Fund (IETF) will help businesses with high power use, such as energy-intensive industries, to cut their bills and carbon emissions through investing in efficiency measures. It will shrink industrial emissions by around 2 million tonnes between 2028 and 2032 – the equivalent of taking nearly 200,000 cars off the road every year. This consultation seeks views on how the fund will work.

Business, Energy and Clean Growth Minister Kwasi Kwarteng said:

> The UK is already cutting emissions faster than any other major economy and we're the first to legislate to end our contribution to climate change entirely. Eliminating emissions from industry is key to achieving this, but doing so does not have to mean compromising our business success. That's why we're bolstering our investment in clean growth.
>
> Ensuring energy intensive businesses are equipped with the latest low-emission technologies will not only helps our transition to net-zero, but will also ensure these companies are more agile and competitive going forward – creating new skilled, well-paid jobs.

In June the UK government became the first major economy to legislate to end its contribution to climate change by 2050. Emissions from industry, currently accounting for around a quarter of all UK emissions, will need to be cut to nearly zero to achieve this.

Eight industrial sectors (cement, ceramics, chemicals, food and drink, glass, iron and steel, oil refining, and pulp and paper) currently emit around 2 thirds of industrial carbon emissions. Ministers are keen to fund tried and tested low-carbon industrial processes, as well as exploring new options that will keep British industries agile.

Businesses in various sectors are already taking steps to reduce their energy consumption and carbon footprint, including:

- Nestle, who are using high temperature heat pumps for heating and cooling during the chocolate manufacturing process – cutting energy costs by nearly £150,000 every year
- manufacturer Ibstock Bricks, who are using brick-building robots to help make repetitive manufacturing processes more efficient, halving emissions output for every brick produced
- manufacturer Saint-Gobain, who are saving £165,000 a year in energy

costs by becoming more responsive to demand, powering down its factories at peak energy periods
- in the ceramics sector, whose energy accounts for a third of its production costs, heat reduction programmes have reduced the heat used to glaze tableware by 5%, helping cut their carbon footprint by 25%

- the Fund is worth £315 million over the period to 2023/24. The first phase of the Fund will be launched in spring 2020 and open for applications in summer 2020, with the second phase following in 2021
- the IETF will provide funding for capital investment in energy efficiency and deep decarbonisation projects. The first phase will provide around £30 million of funding with the rest to follow in the second phase.

New 'league table' reveals electric car charging availability across UK as Transport Secretary calls on local authorities to do more

- government urges local authorities to take advantage of £5 million funding available to help build up local charging infrastructure and increase access to chargepoints for drivers
- 'postcode should play no part' in ease of using an electric car, Transport Secretary says
- data reveals London currently leads electric vehicle infrastructure revolution nationally with almost 4,000 charging stations

The Transport Secretary has this week written to local authorities across the country, urging them to take advantage of funding on offer to build up their electric car charging infrastructure and to increase local access to chargepoints for drivers.

This comes as the Department for Transport publishes a 'league table' of data illustrating the public electric car charging infrastructure available across the UK and highlighting gaps in provision.

The government is clear that it wants driving an electric vehicle to be convenient for people from all corners of the country, and that local authorities have a key role to play. The data shows that London is currently leading the electric vehicle infrastructure revolution nationally, with almost 4,000 public electric vehicle charging devices installed in the region. Scotland has more than 1,500 charging devices, with the North West, South East and South West regions just behind. In these regions Glasgow City, Manchester and Liverpool cities, and Milton Keynes are amongst the best performing local authorities.

There are now more charging locations than petrol stations, but there are still over 100 local authorities with fewer than 10 public charging devices per 100,000 population. Figures published today (2 November 2019) reveal there are 15,000 charging devices across the country, equating to 22,500 places to charge.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

> Your postcode should play no part in how easy it is to use an electric car, and I'm determined electric vehicles become the new normal for drivers.
>
> It's good news there are now more charging locations than petrol stations, but the clear gaps in provision are disappointing. I urge local councils to take advantage of all the government support on offer to help ensure drivers in their area don't miss out.
>
> To help increase the provision of charging locations, the government is offering grants for the installation of chargepoints on the street, in work and at home. We are also offering grants to lower the upfront cost of these cars so everyone is able to experience the benefits.

Minister for the Future of Transport George Freeman said:

> Mapping chargepoints and producing a league table of availability by council area is intended to raise awareness.
>
> There are now more than 22,500 public chargepoints and at least one rapid charge point at over 95% of all motorway services areas.
>
> To help level up the country, we've recently doubled the funding available for councils to build chargepoints on residential streets.

Electric vehicles have a key role to play in improving air quality and driving down emissions.

Funding for electric vehicle chargepoints remains available in 2019/20 through schemes including the:

The government has also recently announced a £400 million charging infrastructure investment fund, which aims to catalyse private investment in charging infrastructure, and is consulting on requiring chargepoints be built into all new homes with a parking space.

Charging device location data for the 'league table' is sourced from the electric vehicle charging platform Zap-Map. It represents devices reported as operational at midnight, 1 October 2019.

Government ends support for fracking

- Oil and Gas Authority report published today concludes that it is not possible with current technology to accurately predict the probability of tremors associated with fracking
- Separate proposals to change the planning process for fracking sites will no longer be taken forward at this time

Fracking will not be allowed to proceed in England, the government has announced today, following the publication of new scientific analysis.

Ministers took the decision on the basis of a report by the Oil and Gas Authority (OGA), which found that it is not currently possible to accurately predict the probability or magnitude of earthquakes linked to fracking operations.

Fracking already takes place across the world including in the US, Canada and Argentina. However, exploratory work to determine whether shale could be a new domestic energy source, delivering benefits for our economy and energy security, has now been paused – unless and until further evidence is provided that it can be carried out safely here.

Ministers have always been clear that the exploration of England’s shale gas reserves could only proceed if the science shows that it is safe, sustainable and of minimal disturbance to those living and working nearby. For that reason, government introduced tight planning controls through the Infrastructure Act 2015 and set strict limits on seismicity, in consultation with industry.

On the basis of the disturbance caused to residents living near Cuadrilla’s Preston New Road site in Lancashire and this latest scientific analysis, the government has announced a moratorium on fracking until compelling new evidence is provided.

The government also confirmed today that it will not be taking forward proposed planning reforms for shale gas developments at this time. These proposals were consulted on in 2018 but will not be implemented now.

Business and Energy Secretary Andrea Leadsom said:

> Whilst acknowledging the huge potential of UK shale gas to provide a bridge to a zero carbon future, I’ve also always been clear that shale gas exploration must be carried out safely. In the UK, we have been led by the best available scientific evidence, and closely regulated by the Oil and Gas Authority, one of the best

> regulators in the world.
>
> After reviewing the OGA’s report into recent seismic activity at Preston New Road, it is clear that we cannot rule out future unacceptable impacts on the local community.
>
> For this reason, I have concluded that we should put a moratorium on fracking in England with immediate effect.

Other sources of natural gas will continue to contribute to the UK’s diverse energy mix. The Committee on Climate Change has previously said that there will still be a requirement for natural gas in a 2050 net zero economy.

Maintaining diverse gas supplies, for use during the transition as the UK renewable sector grows – or for the production of hydrogen – remains a priority for this government.

Business, Energy and Clean Growth Minister Kwasi Kwarteng said:

> The Committee on Climate Change’s advice is clear that natural gas will continue to have a key role to play as we eliminate our contribution to climate change by 2050, including for the production of hydrogen. However, following our action today, that gas will need to come from sources other than domestic fracking.
>
> Today’s decision will not in any way impact our energy supply. The UK benefits from one of the most active gas markets in the world, with security ensured through diverse sources – including domestic offshore production, pipelines from Europe and liquid natural gas terminals.

The Traffic Light System was introduced in 2012 as an evidence-based method of regulating seismicity caused by shale gas exploration. It has operated at Preston New Road, allowing the OGA to swiftly put a halt to activity when required – including after several significant events this summer.

Oil and Gas Authority Director of Regulation Tom Wheeler said:

> Since the OGA suspended hydraulic fracturing at Preston New Road we have been considering whether the operator’s plans are still appropriate to manage the risk of induced seismicity. The OGA’s considerations have been informed both by the seismic events and by independent scientific analysis of data from the first Preston New Road well.
>
> Based on these, the OGA believes that further detailed geomechanical analysis would be needed before we could evaluate with confidence whether hydraulic fracturing could resume in the Fylde, or elsewhere, consistent with the government’s policy aims.

1. Operations at Preston New Road, Lancashire, have been suspended since a magnitude 2.9 event was recorded on 26th August 2019.
2. On the basis of the current scientific evidence, government is confirming today that it will take a presumption against issuing any further Hydraulic Fracturing Consents. This position will be maintained unless compelling new evidence is provided. While future applications for Hydraulic Fracturing Consent will be considered on their own merits by the Secretary of State, in accordance with the law, the shale gas industry should take the government’s position into account when considering new developments.
3. The OGA has advised the government that until further studies can provide clarity, they will not be able to say with confidence that further hydraulic fracturing would meet the government’s policy aims of ensuring it is safe, sustainable and of minimal disturbance to those living and working nearby.
4. The Infrastructure Act 2015 included the requirement for operators to obtain Hydraulic Fracturing Consent which ensures that all the necessary environmental and health and safety permits have been obtained before activities can commence. The Consent process also includes the requirement for an independent financial analysis of the operator to be carried out to ensure they can meet their licence obligations, including decommissioning.