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Mark Roberts
Chief Executive
Environmental Standards Scotland
Ìrean Àrainneachdail na h-Alba



5 November 2025

Dear Mark,

Recommendation in relation to Control and Impact of Invasive Non-Native Species

Thank you for your letter of 8 October 2025 making a recommendation under section 20(2)(c) of the UK Withdrawal from the European Union (Continuity) (Scotland) Act 2021. I was interested to hear about the work ESS has been carrying out to consider how we can better control and manage INNS, which I recognise as a significant issue, given its role as a key driver of biodiversity loss.

I note your recommendation that the Code of Practice on INNS, which is published under section 14C of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, is reviewed and updated. I also note your suggestion that this is done within one year of the Natural Environment (Scotland) Bill receiving Royal Assent or 1 May 2027, whichever is earlier.

I accept that the Code should be subject to a review to ensure it is fit for purpose and a helpful tool in tackling INNS. Accordingly, I have instructed my officials to begin considering how best to take this work forward and they will endeavour to keep you updated on progress. However, you will be aware that there is a Scottish Parliament election in spring 2026 and accordingly it will be for the next administration to complete the work on the Code. In light of this I should highlight that I think the proposed timescale for completion of this work may prove challenging.

I note that you may be in touch again with further recommendations in relation to your ongoing investigation into INNS.

Yours sincerely,



GILLIAN MARTIN