



Salmon & Trout Association

Fighting for the future of game angling

Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales

President: The Duke of Northumberland

The Baroness Young of Old Scone
Chief Executive
Environment Agency

April 13th 2007

Dear Barbara,

Firstly, apologies for emailing this letter, but I wanted to get it to you as quickly as possible following our extremely useful meeting on Tuesday, for which very many thanks.

I just wanted to confirm the one issue of sheep dip which we discussed. A meeting of the EA (Chemicals Group) and VMD led Sheep Dip Pollution Reduction Steering Group will take place on April 17th, chaired by Philip Rees, to discuss which of the four options on sheep dip should be recommended to the Minister for sign-off:

- Option 1 - Do nothing (Bring back cypermethrin sheep dips to the market)
- Option 2 - Continued use with additional controls
- Option 3 – Limited time period re-introduction
- Option 4 - Ban of cypermethrin sheep dips

We would very much appreciate a robust stance from the EA along the lines that, while we appreciate the need for efficient animal welfare, environmental protection is a statutory obligation which has an over-riding responsibility. We therefore urge an immediate (permanent) ban on cypermethrin sheep dips, and adoption of the Blueprint for Water Ask that a programme be set out during 2007 for the removal of all sheep dips within a definite timescale, following consultation between EA, VMD, the agricultural industry and environmental and fisheries NGOs.

We believe this is the only way to stop further degradation of the aquatic environment from sheep dip impact. As we discussed, the majority of pollution incidents arise from farmers believing they were operating within regulations and guidelines, but found it impossible to stop their sheep impacting watercourses in some way, often weeks after the dipping process. Similarly, wool processing factories are also implicated in sheep dip contamination of receiving watercourses, proving the longevity and extreme toxic nature of sheep dips and, as a result, an inability to use them safely, whatever improved regulations or guidelines might be suggested by the industry. I have included a few facts in an annex below.

We would greatly appreciate your influence over this issue.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Knight', written in a cursive style.

Paul Knight
Director

Annex

Sheep dip facts

- Harmful to fish at 1 part per billion
- Sheep dips are the biggest single chemical threat to our rivers.
- Since 1992, sheep dips accounted for 30-40% of freshwater chemical pollution incidents.
- 100% of sampled streams tested by EA in 2002 and 2003 tested positive for sheep dip pollution.
- 49% of the rivers in Wales are known to be at risk of sheep dip pollution and WFD failure of good ecological status.
- Cypermethrin remains biologically active in soil after 133 days.
- 100 million tonnes of sheep dip are disposed of on land each year.
- 2003 study showed lapwing chick survival diminished where their nesting sites were on land used for sheep dip disposal, due to lack of food.
- Animal slurry mixed with cypermethrin dip increases faecal coli form and pathogens, such as Salmonella spp. by a magnitude of four.
- Every sheep wool-cleaning factory pollutes rivers with sheep dip waste. In 1999, the EA found that 27 of 27 discharges from sheep processing plants polluted rivers.
- £2.5 million capital damage to Welsh river property values caused by sheep dip pollution.