

We expose and end the cruelty inflicted on animals in the name of sport.



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Dear Mark,

Many thanks for the opportunity to attend the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee meeting last week, and to present our evidence on the use of snares in Wales.

In the second evidence session, there was some discussion of the use of statistics from the 2012 Defra Report on the extent and humaneness of snaring. In the course of discussion, the erroneous claim that the League Against Cruel Sports misrepresented statistics from the 2012 report when estimating the maximum number of animals that could be caught by snares by taking and extrapolating capture rates from the single operator who carried out the humaneness testing work was repeated.

In light of this, I thought it would be helpful to write and set out our methods with regards to the figures. The estimated number of snares that are set every year in Wales is shown in the Defra report as between 17,200 and 51,600. The capture rate we used was in fact calculated from the data of the two different field studies (not just one as alleged) run by Defra and used in the report, in which, combined, 62 foxes were caught in 1,915 snare days, a capture rate of one animal in every 31 snare days. These are the only studies Defra mentions in the report on capture rates, and when the average capture rate from them is multiplied by the maximum number of snares set estimated by Defra, it produces the figures of up to 1.7 million animals for the UK, and 370,000 for Wales. These values should be interpreted as estimations of the maximum number of potential animals that such amounts of snares could catch.

The numbers produced come from calculations using the only available data provided by Defra, and the only independent research so far. Although they are an extrapolation, and as such subject to a high margin of error, they remain the best estimations to date. Furthermore, when we have discussed the figures shown in our literature with Defra officials they have never suggested to us that we have misinterpreted or misused them.

I hope this further information is helpful for the Committee. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if we can be of any further assistance.

Best wishes,  
Rhiannon Evans

Senior Public Affairs Officer (Wales)