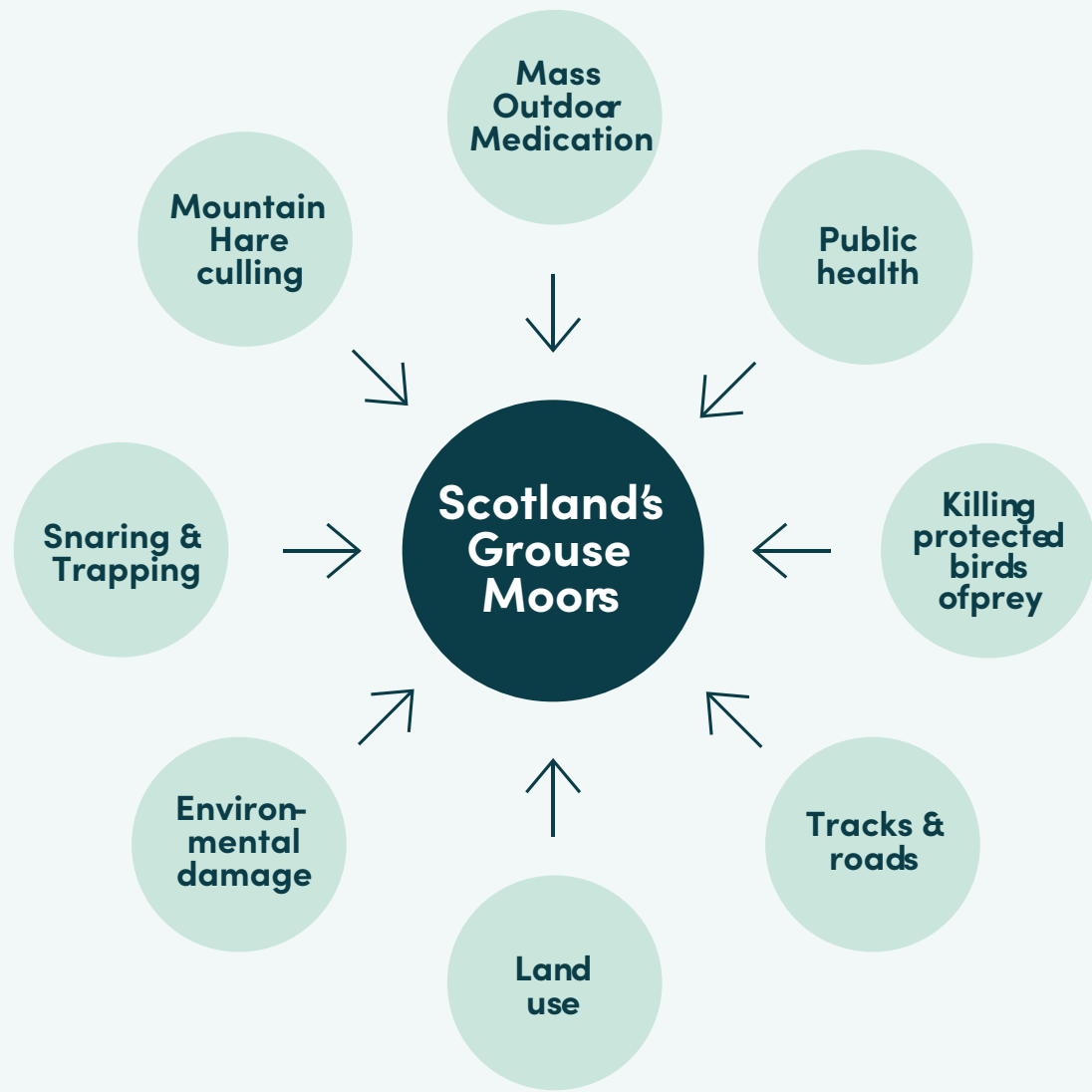


The
REVIVE
MANIFESTO

The circle of destruction surrounding

Scotland's grouse moors



About this manifesto

This Revive Manifesto sets out policies that we believe the next Scottish Parliament should address if it is serious about tackling climate change, land reform, social justice, protecting Scotland's wildlife and biodiversity.

About the coalition

Revive is a coalition of like-minded organisations working for grouse moor reform in Scotland. The coalition is made up of Common Weal, Friends of the Earth Scotland, League Against Cruel Sports Scotland, OneKind and Raptor Persecution UK.

The need to significantly reform Scotland's grouse moors is of immense importance in order to tackle the negative impacts this management has on the environment, social justice and animal welfare. It also provides a platform to reduce wildlife crime and represents natural common ground to unite around.

Many thousands of people from across Scotland have already joined the Revive movement in calling for change that will benefit our people, our wildlife and our environment.

Scotland's grouse moors

Somewhere between 12-18% of Scotland is managed for grouse shooting but no-one really knows how much exactly because there is not enough meaningful information about what land is used for. However, it is abundantly clear that grouse moor management uses up a huge area of land with very little benefit to society.

What is worse, intensively managed driven grouse moors are known to cause immense damage to our environment and our wildlife to provide an excess of grouse for sport shooting.

For over 150 years, moorland in Scotland has been managed for red grouse-shooting. During this period, Scotland's upland landscapes were transformed by the construction of access infrastructure, burning of heather moorland and the destruction of species such as white-tailed eagle, golden eagle and hen harrier through poisoning, trapping and shooting. The resultant heather moorlands that are sometimes regarded as an iconic part of the Scottish landscape are, in reality, highly modified habitats managed to encourage high populations of one species, red grouse, so they can be killed for 'sport' in the course of recreational shooting.

Why REVIVE?

The circle of destruction that surrounds (particularly driven) grouse shooting, so that more grouse are available for sport shooting for a few people, causes vast damage to the environment and wildlife for little economic benefit compared to the alternatives.

The MANIFESTO

Revive believes that significant reform of Scotland's grouse moors should be in the manifesto of Scotland's political parties and include the following commitments:

- **Protecting Scotland's peatland by ending muirburn for the purpose of grouse moor management**
- **A ban on the use of medicated grit**
- **A change to the use of non-lead ammunition**
- **Regulation of off-road hill tracks**
- **Transformational land reform to be enacted on a national scale**
- **An end to the snaring, trapping and killing of Scotland's wildlife for the purpose of increasing grouse numbers**
- **Licensing of all grouse moor estates**
- **A transition away from driven grouse shooting**

Recommendations

Environmental Protection

Protect peatland on Scotland's moors

Peat is a crucial absorber of carbon in the atmosphere and helps to mitigate climate change. Muirburn on peat both produces carbon and harms the peat's ability to absorb carbon. It should no longer be permitted for grouse moor management.

Muirburn for any conservation reasons should only be carried out under a fully transparent licence system to stop loopholes being exploited by grouse moor managers.

Muirburn for grouse shooting takes place over a huge land area in Scotland and ensuring that all grouse moor managers comply with best practice may be costly and impossible to police properly. Strict licensing of all muirburn is necessary but licences should never be given to maintain an excess of grouse for sport shooting.

Benefits:

- Ending this practice will make an important contribution to Scotland reaching its climate targets
- Help our uplands become more resilient to the unpredictable effects of climate change
- Greater protection against flooding instead of contributing to the risk of flooding
- Ending all muirburn for grouse shooting will reduce the burden on the government to police large land areas if muirburn for grouse shooting was otherwise allowed to continue under licence

Ban the use of medicated grit

Medicated grit containing the drug Flubendazole (and similar), which studies elsewhere have identified as an environmental contaminant with acute and chronic toxicity, should be banned from grouse moors.

This is mass outdoor medication. More than a hundred thousand unregulated and unmonitored medicated grit stations are spread throughout the uplands, threatening the environment and our wildlife, resulting in an unnatural excess of grouse available for sport shooting. The medicated grit can be 10-20 times more than the recommended strength of dosage and research shows that contaminated grit stations are a significant route for rapid disease transmission not just in red grouse but other species of high conservation concern.

Benefits:

- Remove risks to wildlife and the environment
- Remove risks for human consumption
- End unnatural densities of grouse which help to spread disease.

Use non-lead ammunition

Lead ammunition is poisonous, particularly on wetland and should not be left in the ecosystem. All peatland should be redefined as wetland to aid this purpose.

Lead shot should be banned across Scotland and non-toxic alternatives used instead.

Benefits:

- Reduced risks for human consumption / poisoning
- Reduced risks for wildlife poisoning
- A healthier ecosystem
- Legislation putting us in line with plans in the EU



Off-road hill tracks should be regulated

Off-road constructed vehicle tracks (hill tracks) should require planning permission on all land licenced as a grouse shooting estate. These estates should be ineligible to use Permitted Development Rights (PDR) exemptions, which currently appear to be misused on account of the claim that the tracks are for agricultural or forestry use.

These off road ‘hill tracks’ scar entire landscapes to make life easier for shooters and grouse moor managers and can damage sensitive vegetation and large peatland areas.

Benefits:

- Maintain areas of natural beauty for locals and tourists
- Protect our vital peatland
- Greater accountability over decision-making process for new tracks in the countryside

Social Justice

Transformational land reform

The Scottish Government should create a National Land Agency which would be partially funded by land taxes. Land purchases could then be obtained at a national level and sold/rented to communities and NGOs that meet the purchase criteria for good land use – social good, wildlife and environment.

Our people’s responsible access to Scotland’s land should be defended and be free of harassment.

The Government should investigate ways to end

agricultural and other subsidies which many shooting estates receive and redirect them towards land uses which benefit our people, wildlife and the environment.

Benefits:

- Greater transparency, productivity, affordability, availability and accountability over Scotland’s land which should be seen as a resource for all our people
- Efforts on a national-scale and at a national level to help meet climate targets on time
- Individual community buyouts can be helped by proper funding and national level support

Animal Welfare

Ending the cruel killing of animals to increase grouse numbers

This includes the (legal and illegal) methods of killing untold thousands of animals to increase the numbers of grouse for sport shooting which must stop.

1. Scotland’s iconic mountain hares should be protected all year round with killing prohibited except under strict licence
2. A ban on snares, stink pits, decoy birds as bait, and cage traps across Scotland
3. The use of spring traps should require a strict licence and should not be permitted for grouse moor management (increasing grouse numbers for sport shooting)
4. A system of mandatory proficiency tests and licensing to be introduced for all shooters in Scotland to ensure animal welfare considerations are met
5. Tougher penalties for wildlife crime

Benefits:

- Scotland’s world-renowned wildlife would be protected
- Birds of prey, currently widely persecuted on some driven grouse moors, would be better protected
- Ending the senseless killing as the world faces a crisis in wildlife loss on a mass-scale
- International acclaim and recognition for efforts
- Wildlife tourism benefits

Licensing of grouse moors

Grouse moors are one of the least regulated industries in Scotland and licensing to ensure best practice should be implemented without delay. The goal should be to end the unsustainable elements of grouse moor management – the circle of destruction that currently surrounds it.

The terms of obtaining a licence for grouse shooting should require:

1. A legal commitment to protect peatlands and an end to muirburn
2. An end to mass-outdoor medication
3. A change to the use of non-lead ammunition
4. Ending the killing of animals to increase grouse numbers

If the terms of the licence are broken or if illegal activities have taken place the licence should be removed or refused. As with existing offences, proving unlawful conduct beyond reasonable doubt may be difficult, but a lesser standard of proof may be acceptable as the basis for exercising the regulatory body’s discretion to refuse or revoke a licence.

As the Werritty report has shown, licensing is likely to

be one of the key legislative routes to the above changes but where applicable all the recommendations above should be implemented regardless of licensing grouse moors.

Benefits:

The circle of destruction that surrounds the industry will end.

An end to driven grouse shooting

Revive believes that a transition away from driven grouse shooting would help unlock our land’s potential, allowing for a more diverse and prosperous upland environment in line with much of mainland Europe.

A widescale change from the monoculture of intensive grouse moor management towards a more sustainable and diverse wooded landscape would not only stop the current environmental damage, it would be a game changer in the fight against catastrophic biodiversity loss and for the sequestration of carbon.

This transition would also make our country less volatile and more resilient to the effects of climate change in the future. Moreover, a transition away from driven grouse shooting would end the wider circle of destruction that surrounds the industry. The illegal elements that have long been associated with driven grouse shooting, the persecution of birds of prey like golden eagles, are likely to be dramatically reduced.

All the unsustainable elements associated with grouse shooting will end and this transition will lead to alternative land uses (and ownership) which can be better utilised to benefit our people, our wildlife and the environment.



Definitions

Driven grouse shooting

Driven grouse shooting is the practice of using a line of people ('beaters') to drive a number of red grouse over the heads of shooters waiting behind grouse 'butts' (shooting stances) with shotguns. Driven grouse shooting is made more economically viable by undertaking the above range of management actions to produce favourable conditions for red grouse.

This is widely seen as the most extreme form of grouse shooting as a higher number of grouse are needed to sustain regular shoots, during the four-month shooting season.

Walked up grouse shooting

Walked up grouse shooting is the practice of walking through the landscape shooting red grouse that are flushed by the shooter, sometimes with the aid of a dog, on a far less intensive scale than driven grouse shooting.

Provided the circle of destruction (muirburn, wildlife killing, mass outdoor medication etc.) is tackled in its entirety, this variant of grouse shooting can be regarded by some as a more sustainable alternative. Many also believe that killing grouse, one of Scotland's most iconic birds, purely for sport alone is unethical and political parties may wish to adopt this principled view.



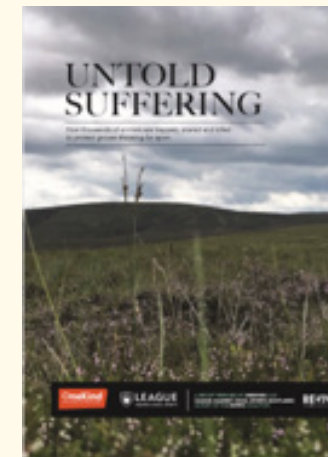
Economics of grouse moor management

- 12–18% of Scotland's land
- Brings in around £23 million a year – less than 0.04% of Scotland's economy (GVA)
- Less than 3,000 FTE jobs at an average salary of £11,401
- Economic impact and jobs numbers very small compared to other viable land uses
- Estates can receive up to over £300,000 a year in 'agricultural' subsidies

Further reading

- REVIVE: The case for reforming Scotland's driven grouse moors
- Back to Life: Visions of alternative futures for Scotland's grouse moors
- Untold Suffering: How thousands of animals are trapped, snared and killed to protect grouse shooting for sport
- A Better Way: How an alternative to grouse moors could help tackle climate change, increase biodiversity and benefit Scotland's people

All publications available to read at revive.scot/publications/





REVIVE

The coalition for grouse moor reform

Raptor
Persecution
UK



Friends of
the Earth
Scotland

OneKind
Ending cruelty to Scotland's animals

COMMON WEAL



LEAGUE
AGAINST CRUEL SPORTS