



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

The Fur Market in Great Britain: Call for Evidence

May 2021

Date: 31 May 2021

We are the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. We're responsible for improving and protecting the environment, growing the green economy and supporting our world-class food, farming and fishing industries.

We work closely with our 33 agencies and arm's length bodies on our ambition to make our air purer, our water cleaner, our land greener and our food more sustainable. Our mission is to restore and enhance the environment for the next generation, and to leave the environment in a better state than we found it.



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Foreword

Fur farming has been banned in England and Wales since 2000 and in Scotland and Northern Ireland since 2002. We also have restrictions on the import of fur from domestic cats and dogs, from commercial seal hunts, and from wild animals trapped for their fur.

Now that our future relationship with the EU has been established there is an opportunity for the Government to consider any further steps it might take in relation to fur. To inform any future decisions, we are launching a call for evidence to ask for information which might help us to better understand fur sector activity including the trade in fur and its impacts, both in Great Britain (GB) and overseas.

This call for evidence does not present any Government proposals on fur, rather we are openly seeking views about what the general public and stakeholders feel should be done in relation to fur, including the option of doing nothing differently compared to now. If any changes were to be made in future, they would need to be based on a formal Impact Assessment and comply with World Trade Organisation rules. This exercise has been launched jointly by Defra and the Scottish and Welsh Governments, and the responses will be considered on a GB basis. We are keen to hear from all interested parties who may hold useful evidence on fur sector activity, including on the trade in fur and we welcome responses all countries and territories.

For these purposes, fur is defined as any animal skin, with hair, fleece, or fur fibres attached, either in its raw or processed state; for example, that of a mink, fox or rabbit.

This definition of "fur" does not include skins or parts of skins which are intended to be converted into leather, or cowhide, sheepskin or shearling, or synthetic materials intended to look like fur.

Executive Summary

We are seeking information and evidence on the commercial fur sector in GB to inform future decision making, including trading activity. We are not seeking information on non-commercial private or public sector activity in this call for evidence; for example, transactions and exchanges between private individuals.

Evidence and views would be particularly welcome on potential impacts on business, and on any potential unintended consequences within GB or abroad. Evidence is welcome in the form of statistical data, case studies, literature reviews, personal experiences, reports and documents, whether new or historic. Wherever possible, please provide full references for any documentation that you submit.

We are looking for information in the following key areas:

- Scale and nature of domestic fur sector activity, including trading;

- Scale and nature of activities abroad which are integral to our existing domestic fur sector;
- Individuals' attitudes towards the domestic fur sector.

This call for evidence is being conducted in line with the Cabinet Office "Consultation Principles" which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance>

If you have any comments or complaints about the process, please email:

consultation.coordinator@defra.gov.uk

Confidentiality and Data Protection

Contributing to the call for evidence means that information provided, including personal data, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (in particular the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018). We have obligations to disclose information to particular recipients or to the public in certain circumstances.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, as a public authority, Defra is bound by the access to information regimes referred to above and may therefore be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

Consultation Contents

Please complete 'About you' and 'About your organisation' if you are responding on behalf of an organisation.

Please select and answer only those remaining sections that you wish to respond to. You do not need to respond to every section to complete your response.

About you

Question 1: What is your name?

Question 2: What is your email address?

Question 3: Are you responding as an organisation or an individual?

Please Select-- Organisation- Individual

Question 4: Please give a summary of who your organisation represents and where relevant who you have consulted to formulate your response. If you wish, please provide your organisation's name.

Free text box -

Question 5: Where are you based in the UK?

Please Select-- England- Scotland- Wales- Northern Ireland- Not UK Based

If you are not based in the UK, please specify which country you are based in.

Question 6: Would you like your response to be treated as confidential (required)

Please Select-- Yes- No

About your organisation

Question 7: What type of organisation are you responding for?

Please Select-- A government body- Non-governmental organisation- Local authority- Charity- Consultancy- Small or micro business (Less than 50 employees)- Medium business (50 – 249 employees)- Large business (250 or more employees)- Industry association- Other

If you answered Other, please state your organisation type.

Question 8: What is the primary purpose of your organisation?

Please select-- Retail- Manufacturing- Trade Representation- Animal Welfare- Other

If you answered Other, please state the primary purpose of your organisation.

Please provide your 5-digit Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code, if available (<http://resources.companieshouse.gov.uk/sic/>).

Individuals' attitudes towards fur sector activity

This call for evidence does not present any Government proposals on fur, rather we are openly seeking views about what the general public and other stakeholders feel might be done in relation to fur, including the option of doing nothing.

We recognise that any restrictions on imports or sales of fur in GB would limit the availability of fur products and consumer choice. However, such restrictions would not affect the ownership of existing fur products. We recognise that individuals will have varying views on existing fur sector activity in GB, including trade in fur. We would like better to understand these views.

Question 9: Is it wrong for animals to be killed for the sake of their fur?

Strongly agree – Agree - Neither agree or disagree- Disagree - Strongly disagree

Question 10: What are your views on whether any of following methods are acceptable ways to produce fur products?

For each option please select - Strongly Agree- Agree- Neutral- Disagree- Strongly Disagree – Don't know

- Farming animals primarily for their fur.
- Farming animals primarily for their fur but only if subject to an assurance scheme.
- Trapping or hunting animals for their fur.
- Trapping or hunting animals for their fur but only if as part of a conservation scheme.
- Producing fur as a by-product of legal farming (where fur is not the primary value and purpose of animal production but is a component part e.g. meat).
- Producing fur as a by-product of legal hunting or population control (where fur is not the primary value).

In this question, the term 'assurance scheme' refers to an industry-run scheme which sets standards for scheme members relating to how animals are kept, with scheme members being subject to industry-run inspections.

Question 11: What is your attitude towards the import and/or sale and/or export of fur or fur products in GB?

Free text box -

Question 12: Other than for clothing and apparel, what uses of fur should we be aware of?

Free text box –

Scale and nature of domestic fur sector activity, including trading activity

Question 13. Is your organisation directly involved in the fur sector?

Please Select-- Yes- No

If you selected No, please skip to Question 23.

Question 14. What stage of the supply chain do you operate at?

Please Select — Importing raw fur- Tanning/dressing- Apparel/clothing- Manufacturing- Retail- Specialist Services e.g. storage of fur/fur products- Legal hunting or conservation- Exporting fur outside of GB- Broker/Trader- Other, Please Specify

Tick all that apply

Question 15: Where do you source your inputs from?

Please Select – Imported from outside of GB – Sourced domestically – Both - Other, please specify

Question 16: Where do you send your outputs?

Please select – Exported outside of GB – Traded domestically – Both – Other, please specify

Question 17: How long is the lead time from contracting any fur/ fur products till that fur is placed on the market?

Please Select- 0 to 3 months- 3 to 6 months- 6 to 12 months- 12 to 24 months- Over 24 months

Free text box- Please supply an evidence to support this.

Question 18: What type of fur (animal species) do you mainly deal in?

Please select all that apply – Mink – Fox - Rabbit – Chinchilla – Raccoon Dog – Other, please specify.

Question 19: What origin, or production method, is the fur you deal with derived from?

Please select all that apply – Farmed production – Trapping – Animal By-Product – Other, please specify.

Question 20: What assurance schemes or standards, or other criteria, apply to the fur you deal with?

Free text box- Please supply any evidence to support this.

Question 21: Have you made any recent changes in how you source or trade in fur products?

Please provide any evidence from the last five years, including changes in your sale or purchase of fur products and if possible, any effects this has had on your business.

Question 22: How has the demand for real fur products changed over the last 5 years for you/ your member's organisation(s)?

Please select- Significantly Increased- Slightly Increased- Stayed the same- Slightly decreased- -- Significantly decreased

Please provide specific details if available.

Free text box -

Question 23. How has the overall domestic market for real fur products changed over the last 5 years?

Please select- Greatly Increased- Slightly Increased- Stayed the same- Slightly decreased- Greatly decreased

Please provide specific details if available.

Free text box -

Question 24. Please provide any evidence of the scale and trends of the GB market in faux fur.

Free text box -

Question 25: Please provide any evidence on the number and size of companies and the number of jobs, supported by fur trade in GB?

Free text box -

Question 26. Please provide any evidence on any specific geographical regions where the fur supply chain is concentrated within GB. If possible, please describe the significance this would have on those communities and the extent of local employment within these areas.

Free text box -

We would like to understand, in more detail, the scale of imports, exports and sales of fur in GB.

Question 27. What do you consider to be the total value (in £ sterling) of imports to and exports from GB in relation to (i) raw furskins; (ii) tanned or dressed furskins; (iii) articles of apparel and clothing; (iv) artificial fur?

Please specify a figure for each category

Question 28. What do you consider to be the total weight (in tonnes) of imports to and exports from GB in relation to (i) raw furskins; (ii) tanned or dressed furskins; (iii) articles of apparel and clothing; (iv) artificial fur?

Please specify a figure for each category

Question 29. Explain your response to Question 27 and 28, and please provide any additional evidence relating to the type of fur (animal species) and to the assurance schemes or standards applying, at aggregate level.

Free text box -

Question 30. What is the mark-up generated from fur products sold by your business?

Please select- under 50%- 50-100%- above 100%

Question 31. If not a seller, are you aware of the level of mark-up that is placed on fur products in retail sales?

Please select- under 25%, 25-50%, 50-100%- above 100% - don't know

Question 32. On the scale below, what proportion of the value of your/your members final products does fur account for (for example, a fur trim on a coat)?

Please Select- under 25%- 25%-50%- 50-75%- 75%-100%

Question 33. What proportion of your organisation/ your members organisations is dependent on the import, sale and/or export of fur?

Please Select- under 25%- 25%-50%- 50-75%- 75%-100%

Scale and nature of fur sector activity abroad, which is linked to our domestic fur sector activity

We understand that some states and countries have already imposed bans or restrictions on the fur sector, which go beyond the current position in GB, such as recent changes introduced in California USA. We would welcome further insight or evidence on the extent and effects of such prohibitions, whilst noting that no decisions have been made by the Government about any future changes.

Question 34: What country(ies) do you source your fur from, if originating from outside of Great Britain?

Please state which country(ies)

Free text box -

Question 35. Which types of product do you primarily import?

Please select – raw fur – tanned fur – semi-finished product – finished products

Question 36. What sourcing method does your answer to Question 35 primarily involve?

Please select all that apply – Farmed production – Trapping – Animal By-Product - Conservation activity – Indigenous and cultural communities – Other, please specify

If you select more than one option, please specify the country(ies) of origin for each sourcing method. – Free text box

Question 37. What assurance schemes or other standards apply? Please specify the country which applied the assurance scheme or standard.

Free text box

Question 38. We are interested in finding out more about other countries' existing or planned restrictions on fur. Please provide any information and/or evidence that you are aware of.

Please state which country you are referring to in your response.

Free text box -

Further evidence

Question 39: Please provide any other relevant evidence you would like to include to inform decisions on the GB fur trade.

How to respond

Please submit your response by **28th June 2021** using the online portal at <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/animal-welfare-in-trade/fur-market-in-great-britain>