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for Environment  
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Date: 14 March 2024

Dear Consultee,

## **Bovine Tuberculosis consultation on the next phase of badger control policy**

We are writing to invite views on proposals for the next phase of badger TB control policy. These proposals are part of the Government's bovine TB eradication strategy.

While the majority of our disease control measures focus on cattle, this consultation proposes retaining badger culling as an option in targeted parts of the High-Risk and Edge Area, where there are high levels of infection in cattle, and evidence suggests badgers are part of the problem in the spread of disease to these herds.

The proposal sets out more detail to the provision made in 2021 to retain culling as an option where epidemiological assessment indicates that it is needed.

Culling would continue in these targeted areas until the disease situation has been deemed to have improved, following an annual review by the UK's Chief Veterinary Officer. At this point, badger vaccination would be used to ensure the results achieved through culling are maintained. This sets out a clear exit strategy to non-lethal control, preventing the return of disease in these areas.

The proposal builds on our investment in wider scale badger vaccination, which is now much more of a reality, with more farms involved in vaccination programmes than ever before.

The consultation also seeks views on proposals to reduce the administrative burden placed on farming groups delivering badger culling and vaccination, as well as suggested updates to the ibTB interactive mapping tool which would help those purchasing cattle to better manage risks when sourcing new stock.

The following documents may be found on GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/bovine-tb-future-badger-control-policy-and-cattle-measure-proposals>.

- consultation document

- consultation letter
- consultations privacy notice

## **Responses**

To submit your consultation response please complete the consultation questionnaire provided through Citizen Space (Citizen Space is an online consultation tool).

If you require a copy of the consultation, please contact us at [bTBengage@defra.gov.uk](mailto:bTBengage@defra.gov.uk).

This consultation will remain open for 5 weeks from 14 March 2024.

The proposals set out in this consultation have been developed over the last two years during the transitional period after the consultation in 2021. They follow engagement with the Bovine Tuberculosis Partnership, a government and stakeholder group.

Responses should be received by 23:59pm on 22 April 2024.

## **Confidentiality and data protection**

Please find the Consultations Privacy Notice uploaded alongside this consultation.

This consultation document and consultation process have been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent and where relevant who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal data, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes. These are primarily the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs), the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA).

We have obligations, mainly under the EIRs, FOIA and DPA, 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, the Department is bound by the FOIA 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.

If you have any comments or complaints about the consultation process, please email:  
[consultation.coordinator@defra.gov.uk](mailto:consultation.coordinator@defra.gov.uk).

Thank you for your help in this matter. If you have any queries, please contact us as above.

Yours faithfully

**Bovine TB Programme**

Animal and Plant Health and Welfare Directorate  
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs