

DR CAROLINE LUCAS
Green Party
for the South East of England

Jim Fitzpatrick MP
Minister for Food, Farming and Environment
DEFRA
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR

25 September 2009

Dear Minister,

I am writing in relation to the continued illegal use of the indiscriminate and inhumane Gin (leg hold) trap in England and Wales, which many constituents have drawn to my attention.

As you will be aware, the Gin trap was banned in England and Wales in 1958, and in Scotland in 1971. However, an anomaly exists insofar as the sale and possession of these traps is not outlawed.

Although, in accordance with Council Regulation (EEC) no 3254/91 of 4 November 1991, the *use* of the gin trap has been made illegal in England and Wales, this measure is meaningless as long as their *sale* and *possession* is permitted. Because there is no access to most private land, these traps will continue to be used whilst there is a very low risk of them being discovered. For this reason, only a ban on the sale and possession of these traps will prevent them being used.

Because Gin traps are set by unscrupulous people it is highly likely they will not be regularly checked, and even if they are, pet animals are likely to be killed to avoid discovery. Every year there are numerous reports in the media of animals that have been injured or killed and a wide range of animals are affected including domestic cats, foxes, badgers, rabbits, hares and otters.

I therefore urge you to take action to prevent the illegal use of these traps by outlawing their sale and possession. Until this action is taken, severe and unnecessary animal suffering will continue to take place.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Caroline Lucas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Caroline Lucas MEP