

FAO: NEWSDESK

FROM: Kenneth Stephen, PR and Communications Officer, The Scottish Gamekeepers Association, 07823 770 651.

FREE PICTURE OF SGA Chairman Alex Hogg from The PR and Communications Officer.

For Immediate Release:

## GAMEKEEPERS STATEMENT ON LAND REFORM REPORT

SGA Chairman Alex Hogg said: "The Scottish Gamekeepers Association will consider fully the detail of the report.

"Despite seeking clarification from Scottish Ministers that the jobs of our rural working members would be protected in a system placing far greater emphasis on state and community ownership, we have never received any guarantees this would be the case.

"While some of the proposals are sensible, there is no denying this is a state-centred programme of recommendations which, if implemented, would greatly discourage private investment in Scotland.

"Naturally, this will place a major burden on Scottish tax payers as we seek to re-circulate a smaller pot of money. If the state cannot foot the cost, our members' jobs on the hills and rivers are at stake and, in our view, the wildlife Scotland treasures will be threatened.

"When gamekeepers were taken off Langholm Moor in the Scottish Borders, all wildlife, both predator and prey, crashed, and it has since taken millions of pounds and years of effort to restore the heather habitat alone. We hope Scottish Ministers consider these major proposals carefully and take into consideration the massive contribution Scotland's rural workforce makes to the country's economy and natural heritage