



Scottish Native Honey Bee Society

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We in the Scottish Native Honey Bee Society strongly support the actions being taken by our sister organisation in Ireland, the Native Irish Honey Bee Society, to attempt to strengthen the protection of the precious reserves of *Apis mellifera mellifera* on the island by preventing further imports of non-native honey bees.

The case for prompt action is strong:

- Ireland sustains the last substantial remnant of this once widespread subspecies of honey bee
- in Scotland we have one island reserve and scattered small populations of our native honey bee
- most of Scotland and the rest of GB have stocks that are now hybridised with non-native types
- elsewhere in continental Europe only very small areas still carry pure *A. mellifera mellifera*
- protection exists in a large area of Slovenia for its native honey bee, *A. mellifera carnica*
- both Ireland and the UK are signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity
- Convention on Biological Diversity Aichi targets for 2020 included: *Target 13*

'By 2020, the genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and of wild relatives, including other socio-economically as well as culturally valuable species, is maintained, and strategies have been developed and implemented for minimizing genetic erosion and safeguarding their genetic diversity.'

- recent commercial activities involving the importation of packages for the GB market through Ireland and threats of the establishment of a large queen-rearing unit for non-native stock show how fragile this unique genetic resource remains

We urge the authorities in Ireland to be proactive to stop the threat to this unique genetic resource by commercial activities that are quite unnecessary for the keeping of honey bees in Ireland.

[signed]

23rd May 2021

Dr Gavin Ramsay

Chair, Scottish Native Honey Bee Society, on behalf of the Board of Trustees