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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**2017 No. 1012**

**The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017**

**PART 5**

**Licences**

*Grant of licences*

**Licences for certain activities relating to animals or plants**

**55.**—(1) Subject to the provisions of this regulation, the relevant licensing body may grant a licence for the purposes specified in paragraph (2).

(2) The purposes are—

- (a) scientific or educational purposes;
- (b) ringing or marking, or examining any ring or mark on, wild animals;
- (c) conserving wild animals or wild plants or introducing them to particular areas;
- (d) protecting any zoological or botanical collection;
- (e) preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment;
- (f) preventing the spread of disease; or
- (g) preventing serious damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, vegetables, fruit, growing timber or any other form of property or to fisheries.

(3) Regulations 43 (protection of certain wild animals: offences), 45 (prohibition of certain methods of capturing or killing wild animals) and 47 (protection of certain wild plants: offences) do not apply to anything done under and in accordance with the terms of a licence granted under paragraph (1).

(4) Subject to the provisions of this regulation, the relevant licensing body may grant a licence to permit the taking or the possession or control of certain specimens of any of the species or subspecies listed in Annex II(b) (other than any bryophyte) or Annex IV to the Habitats Directive notwithstanding that the licence is for a purpose not specified in paragraph (2).

(5) Regulations 43, 45 and 47 do not apply to anything done under and in accordance with the terms of a licence granted under paragraph (4).

(6) A licence under paragraph (4) may be granted only to such persons as are named in the licence.

(7) The relevant licensing body may grant a licence under paragraph (4) only if it is satisfied that the grant of the licence would be consistent with the restrictions in Article 16(1)(e) of the Habitats Directive (namely “under strictly supervised conditions, on a selective basis and to a limited extent” and “in limited numbers”).

(8) A licence under paragraph (4) must specify—

- (a) the species or subspecies of animal or plant to which the licence relates;
  - (b) the maximum number of specimens which may be taken or be in the possession or control of the person authorised by the licence, or which particular specimens may be taken or be in the possession or control of that person; and
  - (c) the conditions subject to which the action authorised by the licence may be taken and in particular—
    - (i) the methods, means or arrangements by which specimens may be taken or be in the possession or control of the person authorised by the licence;
    - (ii) when or over what period the action authorised by the licence may be taken; and
    - (iii) where the licence authorises any person to take specimens, the area from which they may be taken.
- (9) The relevant licensing body must not grant a licence under this regulation unless it is satisfied—
- (a) that there is no satisfactory alternative; and
  - (b) that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.
- (10) A licence under this regulation which authorises any person to kill wild animals must specify the area within which and the methods by which the wild animals may be killed and must not be granted for a period of more than two years.
- (11) Where the appropriate authority exercises any functions under this regulation (see regulation 58(3)), the appropriate authority must from time to time consult the appropriate nature conservation body as to the exercise of those functions, and must not grant a licence of any description unless the appropriate nature conservation body has advised as to the circumstances in which, in its opinion, licences of that description should be granted.
- (12) Where the Marine Management Organisation exercises any functions under this regulation (see regulation 58(2)(a)), it must from time to time consult Natural England as to the exercise of those functions, and must not grant a licence of any description unless Natural England has advised as to the circumstances in which, in its opinion, licences of that description should be granted.
- (13) It is a defence in proceedings for an offence under section 8(b) of the Protection of Animals Act 1911 (which restricts the placing on land of poison and poisonous substances)(1) to show that—
- (a) the act alleged to constitute the offence was done under and in accordance with the terms of a licence granted under this regulation; and
  - (b) any conditions specified in the licence were complied with.
- (14) In paragraph (2)(g) “livestock” includes any animal which is kept—
- (a) for the provision of food, skins or fur;
  - (b) for the purpose of its use in the carrying on of any agricultural activity; or
  - (c) for the provision or improvement of shooting or fishing.

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(1) 1911 c. 27.