

Why a minister-driven system will never control TB in the UK

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Sacked and disgraced Welsh minister Alun Davies had his failings but he did reveal in his statements shown below the pressures under which ALL ministers operate.

If you think that you can eradicate this disease in a painless way, you are, frankly, living in cloud-cuckoo-land. That is not how you do it. Of course it is a difficult issue, but we are elected to take difficult decisions,^{1,2}

This is what the ex Welsh Minister for Natural Resources and Food, Alun Davies said in 2009 in the Welsh Assembly when voting **AGAINST** the annulment of badger culling.

Then 3 years later...

"When I was campaigning for re-election it was clear that there was no support in the Welsh public for a badger cull; in fact there is active opposition," he told farmers .

Politicians in every constituency would lose their deposits if they were campaigning for a cull today. We can constantly look back and wish that things were different but there is no support among the Welsh public or indeed the Welsh government to go ahead with a badger cull. There is simply not a majority in the Senedd to pass the policy you require; it is a matter of mathematical reality.³

The impact of media hype on the electorate, the underlying principles by which ministers function and exist, and mathematical reality ensures that TB will never be controlled by the UK system. It is this system difference which distinguishes NZ from the UK. Unlike the UK, NZ has an autonomous, dedicated and accountable team which is responsible for TB control and wildlife management. It is the fact that NZ is dealing with an introduced pest (the possum) and the UK is dealing with a native species (the badger) and all the emotive feelings which this arouses which makes this system difference so relevant. **It ensures that the UK's minister-driven system will never work.**

