

# Incompatible views in DEFRA on whether to cull badgers

Eddie Mair interviewing Dame Margaret Beckett about Prince Charles letters.

Wednesday 13th May 2015 5:25pm BBC Radio Four

[Eddie Mair]

I wonder just finally with your former responsibility for agriculture what you make of his comments on badgers. He wrote in February 2005 to the Prime Minister urging Mr Blair to ..quote.. look again at introducing a proper cull of badgers where it is necessary. I for one cannot understand how the badger lobby seem to mind not at all about the slaughter of thousands of expensive cattle and yet object to the managed cull of an over population of badgers. To me this is intellectually dishonest. Unquote.

[Margaret Beckett]

Yes, I suspect a lot of people will be interested in those comments.

[Eddie Mair]

What do you think?

[Margaret Beckett]

Well I tell you what ... As it happens I left DEFRA before I had to make a decision and basically the real problem with that is that there are two groups whose views are completely mutually incompatible, and while I was there I certainly felt that neither could see any merit in the other's case. So the people who didn't think you should cull badgers absolutely were adamant that it was all a problem with cattle and the people who thought that you should cull badgers were adamant that it was all a problem with badgers. The truth I think lies somewhere between.

## Some instructions on how to play back the broadcast

0:25:30 into 1:02:17 programme at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio/player/b05tlvbj>

In Windows 7, click the mouse icon on the black time bar near the top of the popup.

Then drag the bar to 0:25:30.