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Sorry Eagles, no hunting here!

A hungry eagle with its eye on a lamb circles over the pastures – but the lamb is protected by a laser-wielding scarecrow. This plays with the instincts of the giant eagle till it cuts off.

Scotland virtually wiped out its white-tailed sea eagles over 200 years ago. Not for the thrill of the hunt, but because the raptors were getting too greedy. Some of the eagles were no longer satisfied with fish from the sea, and had taken to swooping on lambs and carrying them off. The farmers showed no mercy, and the sea eagles suffered the consequences.

He is back. The problem, too.

But now the birds of prey are back! In the 1970s, conservationists set up a colony of sea eagles on the west coast of Scotland. Since then, the population has been increasing steadily. That has rekindled the same thorny problem as before, however, with farmers losing young livestock.

The time had come for Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) to come up with a solution. As the agency responsible for preserving Scotland's wildlife and landscapes, SNH's scope of responsibility includes white-tailed sea eagles. They decided to enlist the help of Bird Control Group, a company that specializes in finding speciesappropriate ways of frightening birds away from places where they interfere with human activity, such as airports – or indeed pastures. Now SNH and the Bird Control Group are working together to protect Scotland's lambs without harming the eagles.

Life saving solution

In fact, they already have a promising, life-saving solution in the pipeline: the Agrilaser Autonomic is a fully automated, laser-based protection system that can successfully repel eagles. Installed in the sheep pastures and operated by solar power, the low-wattage lasersystem uses an optical sensor to scan its surroundings up to 2,500 meters. That enables it to keep track of

bird movements. If it detects an approaching eagle, the system directs a low-power laser beam toward the bird, triggering its survival instincts and causing it to flee. So, lamb is off the sea eagles' menu again – looks like it's back to fish!



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