Comments provided by: Individual, UK

General information
"All human beings depend on the environment in which we live. A safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment is integral to the full enjoyment of a wide range of human rights, including the rights to life, health, food, water and sanitation. Without a healthy environment, we are unable to fulfill our aspirations or even live at a level commensurate with minimum standards of human dignity" (John Knox United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner - Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment.

Rodent control is necessary to prevent disease transmission, contamination and consumption of food and feedstuffs, structural damage and fear and anxiety. This control is required in law in many places and in any case as a matter of common sense.

As a practicing pest control technician I am aware of alternatives to AVK's however I am also fully aware of the limitations of these approaches and the misuse that inevitably follows their use.

I have seen dead rodents and other animals in "Humane" traps that have died of dehydration because nobody checked them. I regularly come across glue boards with animals that obviously died a long distressing death because it was left without being checked. I must add that this usually is as a result of DIY amateur attempts at pest control.

I also see the misuse of AVK's, again usually as a result of DIY use. Rodenticides scattered around the outside of buildings and in gardens left in the open to be consumed by birds and other animals.

The alternatives to AVK's do not offer the efficacy and efficiency that the AVK's provide. It is also very easy to say that cost should not be a consideration but try telling that to a person on limited income with a house overrun with rats. Without AVK's the treatment would take much longer and cost a great deal more. All the time the risk to the health of this person and neighbours would be considerable.

Recent changes in the UK with regard to stewardship of rodenticides and the introduction of the new EU CEPA standard has increased awareness of best practice and brought very much to the fore the risks of AVK use. Continuous professional development, trade associations, responsible manufacturers and suppliers reinforce this and keep us updated with this best practice.

Current AVK's provide the best available control and when used correctly offer low risk solutions to rodent issues. I firmly believe that the UK pest control industry is well on the way to providing this low risk service.

I believe that removing all AVK's from non professional use would be beneficial and that professional use should be subject to the standards that are, or soon will be, in force. If these products are banned we will be left virtually defenceless against an increasing threat.

Even with these products I have yet to meet anybody who believes the threat from rodents is declining.