

Submitted to Future Grant Support for Forestry
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Ministerial Foreword - Forestry in Scotland is a sector that we can be justly proud of.

1 - Introduction and Rationale for Providing Grant Support for Forestry

1. Do you agree that grant support for forestry should continue to be improved and developed as a discrete scheme within the overall package of land support?

Yes

Please explain your answer in the text box.:

Grant support for commercial forestry needs a complete overall to stop the self-seeding spread of highly invasive, non-native conifers like sitka spruce and western hemlock in to our most precious natural assets, including ancient woodland.

Invasive species represents one of the five biggest threats to the natural world according to the United Nations. It is insane to pay for invasive species (commercial conifers) to be planted on the one hand while also paying communities and conservation charities with the other hand to remove and destroy the commercial conifers when they have self seeded out of plantations.

2. Are there any changes that would allow for better complementarity between the forestry and agriculture funding options?

Not Answered

Please explain your answer in the text box.:

It's long past time to spell out and own up to the Logging Industry's dirty secret that commercial conifers are highly invasive and very dangerous for Scotland's historic natural identity.

Remove commercial trees from the exemption the currently have in law so that they no longer have a free pass to self seed and invade all our native woodland and wild lands along with rhododendron ponticum.

Any public grants must be for restoration and expansion of existing native and ancient woodland. No more grants for invasive non-native conifers.

2 - Forests Delivering for Scotland's Climate Change Plan

3. How can the support package for forestry evolve to help tackle the climate emergency, to achieve net zero, and to ensure that our woodlands and forests are resilient to the future climate?

Please explain your answer in the text box.:

Scientists are clear that commercial conifer forestry plantations emit more carbon than they store for at least 13 years after they are felled. Then there are all the emissions associated with the transport and processing of the wood. Then there are the fertilisers and pesticides and the acidification of the soil and waterways, and the loss of habitats and species.

One sixth of Scotland has already been sacrificed for conifer monoculture and Scotland is a net exporter of timber. We don't need any more of Scotland's natural identity to be sacrificed for heat trapping, invasive conifer monoculture.

All grants must be focussed on maintaining and expanding ancient and native woodland.

4. Private investment through natural capital and carbon schemes can make a valuable contribution to climate change. Do you agree that the grant support mechanism should have more flexibility to maximise the opportunities to blend private and public finance to support woodland creation,

Not sure

Please explain your answer in the text box.:

Only in respect of maintaining and expanding Scotland's ancient and native woodland. No more non-native conifers.

5. How could the current funding package be improved to stimulate woodland expansion and better management across a wide range of woodland types, including native and productive woodlands?

Please explain your answer in the text box.:

Start by being honest and upfront about the horrendous damage conifer dominated forestry is doing to Scotland.

Grants must be dependent on proper management of the invasive nature of the existing conifer monoculture plantations. No more conifer plantations to be inflicted on Scotland and communities until all the damage being done by the existing conifer plantations is addressed.

6. Do you agree that it should be a requirement of grant support that woodlands are managed to ensure that they become more resilient to the impacts of climate change and pests and disease?

Yes

How can the grant scheme support this?:

Diversify and stop planting invasive conifers.

3 - Integrating Woodlands on Farms and Crofts

7. Which of the following measures would help reduce the barriers for crofters and farmers wanting to include woodland as part of their farming business? Please select all that apply.

Better integration of support for woodland creation with farm support mechanisms, Knowing where to get reliable advice, Clearer guidance on grant options, Information on how current land use could continue with trees integrated throughout

Are there others not listed above?:

Education - farmers must be informed of the risks involved in planting commercial conifers - soil degradation, water acidification, invasive species etc etc

8. Establishing small woodlands can have higher costs. What specific mechanisms would better support small scale woodlands and woodland ownership?

Please explain your answer in the text box.:

Community ownership of land.

Support for conservation minded landowners.

4 - Forests Delivering for People and Communities

9. How can forestry grants better support an increase in easily accessible, sustainably managed woodlands in urban and peri-urban areas?

Please explain your answer in the text box.:

Force Councils to identify land they own that can be planted with native trees and reward those councils that do with grants.

10. How can grant support for forestry better enable rural communities to realise greater benefits from woodland to support community wealth building?

Please explain your answer in the text box.:

Educate people so they understand the land again - rural communities that are out of touch with their land are ripe for exploitation by logging companies and international investment banker. Scotland and future generations will pay the price while the bankers laugh all the way to their private jets. Rural communities are being torn apart by commercial forestry expansion and Scotland is being ground into a monoculture, evergreen mono-colour hell and biodiversity dead zone.

No more 'permitted development' status in the planning system for commercial forestry. Stop wasting everyone's time with box ticking forestry consultations with communities. Stop trashing our ancient and native woodland, hills and wild land.

11. How can the forest regulatory and grant processes evolve to provide greater opportunities for communities to be involved in the development of forestry proposals?

Please explain your answer in the text box.:

As above.

12. How can the forestry regulatory and grant processes evolve to ensure that there is greater transparency about proposals and the decisions that have been made on them?

Please explain your answer in the text box.:

Line up Council planning consultations with Forestry Scotland etc consultations so that one consultation serves all purposes. Remove permitted development status for new forestry in the planning system.

13. Forestry grants have been used to stimulate rural forestry businesses by providing support with capital costs. Do you agree that this has been an effective measure to stimulate rural business?

Not sure

a. How could this approach be used to support further forestry businesses?:

b. How could this approach be used to support further skills development?:

14. How could the FGS processes and rules be developed to encourage more companies and organisations to provide training positions within the forestry sector?

Please explain your answer in the text box.:

Why would anyone who cares about Scotland want to work in the commercial forestry sector when they know how much damage it is doing to our environment and climate?

5 - Forests Delivering for Biodiversity and the Environment

15. The primary purpose of FGS is to encourage forestry expansion and sustainable forest management, of which a key benefit is the realisation of environmental benefits. How can future grant support better help to address biodiversity loss in Scotland including the regeneration and expansion of native woodlands?

Please explain your answer in the text box.:

No more grants for commercial forestry. Scotland already has enough to serve its needs and export timber. The industry and landowners are already wealthy. The average Scot should not be propping up their private jets.

All grants funding now must be for restoring and expanding ancient and native woodland.

16. Herbivore browsing and damage can have a significant impact on biodiversity loss and restrict regeneration. How could forestry grant support mechanisms evolve to ensure effective management of deer populations at:

Landscape scale?:

Deer Management Groups and woodland conservation groups have been working on this for decades. Why is this still an issue?

At least as much damage to native tree regeneration is lost to sheep grazing as deer grazing. Reduce the numbers of sheep and deer. Make venison an attractive meat option.

Rewild and plant dense hedges.

Small scale mixed land use?:

Rewild, plant dense hedges.

If you wish to make any other relevant comments, please do so in the text box below.

Please add your comments here.:

Set up an Environmental Court for Scotland so that regulations are backed up with enforcement.

Scottish Forestry claim the Procurator Fiscal is not interested taking forward cases of illegal felling in ancient and native woodland. Follow the good examples set elsewhere in the world and get an environmental court in place immediately to protect the most important thing we will hand on to future generations - Scotland.

Follow good examples elsewhere, eg New Zealand, and launch a wilding conifer eradication programme backed up by the billions of pounds that will be needed to protect Scotland's ancient and native woodland and wild land from yet more invasive, non-native conifers, rhododendrons etc.

About you

What is your name?

Name:

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Email:

[Redacted]

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

Individual

What is your organisation?

Organisation:

Scottish Forestry would like your permission to publish your response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

Publish response only (without name)

We may share your response internally with other Scottish Forestry policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Forestry to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Yes

I confirm that I have read the privacy policy and consent to the data I provide being used as set out in the policy.

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