

Highland land use strategy discussion group

Notes from meeting Tuesday 15th December in St Kilda Room, Great Glen House at 10.00am

Present: Nicole Wallace (HC), George Hogg (SNH), Giles Brockman (FCS), Keir Smith (FCS), Kenna Chisholm (RSPB), Will Boyd Wallis (CNPA). Secretary - Caroline Vawdrey

Apologies: Ian Wilson (NFUS), Marina Dennis (Crofting Commission)

Item	Discussion	Action
1 Welcome	Nicole Wallace welcomed members to the meeting	
2 Actions from the meeting of 22 04 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Susan contacted, and forward request to operations. b. No further discussion at this stage c. to be carried forward and reviewed in light SG consultation and potential for delivering a HLU d. Will highlighted woodland as one of the prime examples of how a land use can have multiple benefits, citing examples of healthier deer and cattle. Glen Feshie provides a positive example of the multiple benefits of woodland restoration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. SEPA rep tbc. b. complete c. ongoing d. replaced by current actions
3 Scottish Land Use Strategy Consultation-discussion	<p>Discussion included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strategy consultation shies away from resourcing regional frameworks - due to current financial situation. • This Highland working group is willing to take on the role of a regional/local land use partnership as referred to in SG consultation document • There is a need for any future partnership and strategy to be adequately resourced with clear indication from SG regarding finance and need. • There is a need for more defined language - indicating policy and action - in the Scottish land use strategy. <p>The Scottish land use strategy has to be agreed by the end of March and so this should provide further guidance on the governments regional approach and available resources.</p>	<p>All working group members to submit a response to the <u>Scottish land use strategy consultation</u> that includes reference to the Highland group and its willingness to move forward with land use partnerships and strategy. The need for this to be adequately resourced to also be referenced.</p> <p>Consultation closing date - 29th January</p>

Item	Discussion	Action
<p>Highland Land Use Strategy project initiation document</p>	<p>Discussion was based on what the group could most usefully contribute in a climate of decreasing budgets.</p> <p><i>Suggestions included:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide grassroots consultation, possibly with different agencies/organisations taking responsibility for different geographic areas • integration of existing strategies • Incorporation of the Highland Biodiversity Action Plan aims into land use mapping and strategies • Use of a land use strategy to feed into SRDP funding priorities • Use of Lawton principles (based on Sir John Lawton's review '<u>Making Space for Nature</u>') - to look at the land use for biodiversity/wildlife benefit. • consideration to be given to who will undertake an arbitration role in areas of conflict <p>It was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the project initiation document would be kept on hold until a suitable opportunity arises • a collective vision and outline goals for the group would be valuable • that the Highland Council refresh of the Highland Indicative Forestry Strategy would provide a good focus for the group working together, and to highlight potential positive land use relationships and conflicts. • that the potential for integrating existing strategies would be investigated further. • that the group could have a useful role in providing a watching brief on existing frameworks and on ensuring that new initiatives are more integrated with others • that the group is a useful vehicle for reviewing and debating new policies and strategies 	<p>All group members to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agree to commit their time and energy to make the group a success • to use the Highland Council indicative forestry strategy refresh as a test case. The group will discuss both the scope of the work and the plan proposals • to find ways to better integrate current strategies and ensure that new ones integrate with existing plans. • to work towards developing a Highland land use vision • to look for a suitable catchment management project to illustrate the benefits of integrated planning. (The Crown Estate of Glen Livet was cited as an example).
<p>Date of next meeting</p>	<p>late March 2016</p>	

Key Messages - from the land use project initiation document

- The Highlands are a key component of Scotland's identity, renowned for its mountains, coasts and wild open spaces. Our land makes an important contribution to public health and well-being, economic development, biodiversity and the historic environment.
- The Scottish Government want to ensure as far as possible that land-use is integrated, sustainable and responsive to climate change pressures.
- This is an exciting opportunity to address how land in the Highlands can be better used for the benefit of all.
- It is vital that we receive views of Highland communities and those involved in managing land to help set this agenda.