

Response ID ANON-2SNG-88HB-M

Submitted to **Getting the best from our land, consultation on a draft Land Use Strategy for Scotland 2016 - 2021**

Submitted on **2016-01-29 16:57:59**

Information about you

Contact details and publishing consent:

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Publish this response

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government 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 Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Yes

What are your main areas of interest? Please tick up to three boxes.

Farming, General land management (or interest in a combination of land uses), Forestry, Deer and game management, Environment, Biodiversity

other:

Forestry

5 How could the content of the current Scottish Forestry Strategy be updated to better reflect the Objectives and Principles of the Land Use Strategy and other key priorities?

5:

Some indication should be introduced to demonstrate how forestry will relate to other land uses.

The Moorland Forum is keen to encourage the planting of trees in areas where they can add to the social, economic and environmental value of the land. While recognising the need for commercial plantations, the Forum is particularly keen to support the planting of broadleaved trees in cleuchs, where they will enhance the adjoining moorland.

Current policy is to avoid woodland establishment on deep peat, which includes natural regeneration. See Forestry on peatland habitats: Supplementary guidance to support the FC Forests and Peatland Habitats Guideline Note (2000) at <https://goo.gl/0Bvvi1> - "In accordance with the UK Forestry Standard, avoid establishing new forests on soils with

peat exceeding 50 cm depth and on sites that would compromise the hydrology of adjacent bog habitats."

However, planting of trees on open land should only take place after a full impact assessment has been carried out that takes into account other existing and potential land uses, including agriculture and sporting.

Some open land may have little value at present, but some is capable of being restored to fully functioning active peatland or heather moorland and this might be a better use than committing the land to tree cover for a long period.

Upland Land Use

15a Do you think that a strategic vision could be useful for the uplands?

Yes

15b Do you have any comments on this proposal?

15b:

The Forum has expressed support for the recommendation made to SNH by their Science Advisory Committee, following the review of Sustainable Moorland Management, that the Moorland Forum should be tasked to develop a Moorland Vision and a strategy for delivering it. It is understood that this recommendation is now being discussed between the SAC, SNH and the Scottish Government

On the basis that there is no sense in there being two separate initiatives, we suggest that consideration is given to combining the two initiatives. If this is not possible, at the very least, the scoping exercise envisaged in the LUS should take place in close collaboration with any action agreed by SNH & the Scottish Government in response to the SAC recommendation.

When making a decision about how the two initiatives should be considered, the views of the recipients of the visions and strategies should be considered.

Separate development should only take place if there will be a clear separation in the findings of each one. It is suggested that this is unlikely and two separate visions / strategies are likely to lead to confusion.

The SGA published their Moorland Strategy in December 2015 and potentially this provides a third report to add to confusion. However, it is a good bit of work and it should inform the further development of the concept.

However the debate unfolds, members of the Forum will wish to play an active role in the development of a shared vision for Scotland's moorlands and uplands, as the Forum believes it will be an invaluable tool for promoting the importance of the Scotland's moorland resource and for dealing with potential conflicts between different land uses.