



PARTNERSHIP FOR DELIVERY

(Revised 17th December 2018)

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Formed in 2002, Scotland's Moorland Forum has developed into a unique partnership that robustly engages with matters influencing the uplands of Scotland, and actively promotes improvements in policy, practice and management.
- 1.2 The Forum provides the prime opportunity for cross-cutting debate on the future of the Scottish uplands and its communities, and it seeks consensus on key issues affecting the uplands founded on a sound evidence base.
- 1.3 Through its publication *The Principles of Moorland Management*, the Forum has set out the key practices needed to manage the uplands sustainably.
- 1.4 Moorland is a dynamic expression of wild nature, although much of it is managed by people. Moorland includes dry and wet heaths, blanket bogs, rough grasslands and the many habitats associated with these. Moorland covers some 38% of Scotland (3 million hectares).

2 We recognise that:

- 2.1 Scotland's uplands play host to a wide variety of people and communities, which have to be economically sustainable. The infrastructure in the uplands needs greater support;
- 2.2 Scotland's uplands comprise landscapes, traditions, soils, water bodies, habitats and wildlife of national and European importance, some of which face an uncertain future under climatic, demographic and policy changes;
- 2.3 Effectively managed upland areas in rural Scotland offer important economic, social and environmental benefits and make a vital contribution to active enjoyment for health, recreation, education and prosperity;
- 2.4 The uplands must play a key role in contributing to the Scottish Government's priorities for a wealthier, fairer, smarter, healthier, safer, stronger and greener Scotland;
- 2.5 Climate change presents a serious challenge for nature and people dependent on the uplands;

c/o The Heather Trust, PO Box 7749, Lochmaben, Lockerbie DG11 9AE

web site: www.moorlandforum.org.uk e:mail: info@moorlandforum.org.uk

Tel: 01387 723201

Chairman: Hugh Raven

Director: Anne Gray

Administrator: Anne Stoddart

- 2.6 Effective and sustainable upland management is needed for biodiversity, agriculture, forestry, country sports and other forms of recreation, landscape and the natural heritage; and for the provision of ecosystem services such as water, carbon storage, and renewable energy;
- 2.7 Sustainable upland management requires skills, expertise and capital, which are at risk of loss in some areas; the uplands will continue to host a unique range of diverse features, which are best protected and enhanced through integrated delivery by the Scottish Government and its Agencies providing systems to encourage continued and greater investment by the public and private sectors;
- 2.8 A quarter of Scotland's heather moorland has been lost since 1945, and the loss is continuing at about 0.5% each year; this is of the greatest concern to the Forum;
- 2.9 Biodiversity has declined in many upland areas over the last 20 years;
- 2.10 Country sports and tourism are the main enterprises that deliver economic benefits for upland areas; management for country sports has provided some of the best moorland for plants and animals, and it is therefore of great concern that many grouse moors have ceased to operate since the mid-1970s;
- 2.11 Management for nature conservation is an increasingly important land use in the uplands and helps safeguard habitats for some of our most important wildlife species, as well other public benefits;
- 2.12 Management for forestry, agriculture, country sports and deer can help to deliver public and a range of other benefits;
- 2.13 Habitat loss and fragmentation arises from inappropriate afforestation, unsustainable grazing, bracken spread, pests and diseases, loss of management, and reductions in the skilled labour force; and
- 2.14 The integration of land management issues with public access must be developed further.

3 Together we shall:

- 3.1 Deliver action founded on available evidence and consensus;
- 3.2 Develop and disseminate the available evidence about the drivers and nature of changes across upland landscapes and communities;
- 3.3 Support the development and stewardship of Scotland's uplands and communities founded on sustainable management practices for: grouse moors, hill farms, deer, forestry, native woodlands, biodiversity, water quality, flood risk, conservation of soils, fishing, renewable energy, tourism and recreation;
- 3.4 The Forum should seek to halt the decline, stabilise and then increase the area of moorland in Scotland and its biodiversity;

- 3.5 Continue to work with the Scottish Government to implement its policy in the uplands, including the review of grouse moor management the Land Use Strategy and support the development of an Upland Vision, if it is decided to proceed with this.
- 3.6 Contribute as appropriate to the implementation of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, the work of the National Access Forum and support the delivery of good practice;
- 3.7 Encourage appropriate research by Scottish Government institutions and other partners, to address the underlying needs of land and species management in the uplands to better inform decisions by land managers;
- 3.8 Contribute to the development of any major demonstration and research projects, which aim to improve the sustainability of upland areas, ensuring the uptake and delivery of best practice and resolution of conflict;
- 3.9 Work with the Scottish Government and land managers to eliminate all illegal practices, not least the persecution of birds of prey, and work towards adherence to all wildlife and countryside legislation;
- 3.10 Actively promote the importance and values of moorland in ways which contribute to the government's health, social and education agendas;
- 3.11 Contribute to mitigation, adaptation and best practice to address climate change;
- 3.12 Share our work and experiences outwith Scotland, and seek to benefit from lessons learned elsewhere; and
- 3.13 As a key stakeholder, contribute to the passing of new legislation and the development and implementation of policies and initiatives in relation to moorland areas.