

DRAFT Minutes
for the
Forum Meeting
held in the
Dewars Centre, Glover Street, Perth PH2 0TH
on **Friday 2nd November, 2018**

1 Welcome and Apologies

1.1 Attendance & Apologies are listed in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

1.2 The Chairman extended a welcome to

- Ross Johnston, who had replaced Eileen Stuart as forum representative for SNH. Ross is the Head of Service responsible for SNH's outcome around investing in Scotland's Natural Capital.
- Rebekah Strong who had just joined Scottish Land & Estates as Environmental Assistant. Rebekah would be working with Tim Baynes on grouse and moorland issues, and with Karen Ramoo on wildlife management.

2 Update on Work in Progress

Principles of Moorland Management

- 2.1 A Briefing had been provided prior to the meeting which was available on the [forum website](#).
- 2.2 Documents on Mountain Hare, Heather Cutting and Worm Control in Grouse had been published online, and the various stages of development of Mountain Hare Counting and Sheep Tick Control were outlined in the briefing.
- 2.3 The PoMM process provided a shop window to demonstrate partnership working and consensus building within the forum, and members were encouraged to assist with taking the initiative forward.
- 2.4 It was noted that guidance could be provided in many forms including short video clips and could be easily updated.
- 2.5 Guidance could also be 'light touch' and include existing guidance re-badged with reference to the original authors and provide links to different strands of related work to create a more coherent picture.

- 2.6 In discussion the following points were raised:
- 2.6.1 Promotion of both existing and new PoMM guidance was discussed in some detail. The development of a programme of training events was suggested, and exploration of the extent to which these topics were covered at college level was also raised.
 - 2.6.2 Richard Cooke pointed to the example of the good practice guidance developed for wild deer management and, in particular, to the recent development to move the guidance online and incorporate the use of short videos.
 - 2.6.3 The creation of a PoMM hashtag was proposed for use at key times of the year to coincide with key events.
 - 2.6.4 Needs assessment was also discussed, with recognition that priority should be given to producing guidance that there was an identified need for.
 - 2.6.5 Better connections to practitioners throughout the development process was also suggested with those working on the ground becoming more involved in the creation of any guidance.
 - 2.6.6 Links were made to the current Grouse Moor Management Group's (GMMG) review process and outcomes.
 - It was acknowledged that work aimed at raising standards and demonstrating good practice would be valuable whether the GMMG recommended further regulation or not.
 - A meeting with Professor Werritty had been arranged for the Chairman, Hugh Raven and Director, Anne Gray in early December to discuss how the Forum might be of assistance to issues raised in the final report. The Chairman and Director would ensure that feedback from that meeting informed the PoMM development process. **Action: Director**
- 2.7 A meeting of the PoMM Steering Group would be arranged to develop in more detail the forward direction of the initiative. **Action: Simon Thorp**
- 2.7.1 Those not already members who wished to join this group were requested to contact the Director. **Action: members**

3 Uplands Manifesto

- 3.1 A Briefing had been provided on the [forum website](#) prior to the meeting.
- 3.2 In discussion the following points were raised:
 - 3.2.1 It was generally agreed that it would be overly ambitious for the Forum alone to attempt to write a Vision for the Uplands, and this was not the intention.

- 3.2.2 There was a need to think about whether a Manifesto was the right vehicle to deliver a message around better land use decisions and choices.
- 3.2.3 It was suggested that a meeting of the working group be convened to agree in the first instance the scope of any output, i.e. what it aimed to achieve, who its messages were targeted at and how the information would be presented.
- 3.2.4 A better articulated view of what the uplands mean to Scotland was suggested.
- 3.2.5 Demonstration that the plethora of single issue/action plans had created a confusing picture for land managers which meant action on the ground was not joined up and that each agenda was in competition with others for funding and recognition would be helpful.
- 3.2.6 If the scope extended to uplands then the document would need to encompass more than moorland management. Uplands and moorlands were not the same thing and there was a danger of confusing the two.
- 3.2.7 Input should be sought from the tourism and recreation sectors who were key stakeholders in the uplands and moorlands of Scotland and currently not represented on the forum.
- 3.2.8 It was pointed out that the SNH scoping document had not yet received a response from government and that without a steer from government there was a risk that any work by the Forum would have no real audience at a political level. The Chairman clarified the content of a recent letter from the Environment Secretary on the matter.
- 3.2.9 It was suggested that an output could, in line with SNH's Uplands Vision scoping document, consider the key economic, social and environmental benefits that the uplands provide using the CICES framework.
- 3.2.10 It was suggested that it would be helpful if the document could be produced through honest appraisal of the issues and without those contributing seeking to push particular agendas.
- 3.2.11 Current Group Membership was as follows:

Name	Surname	Organisation
Anne	Gray	HT
Julia	Stoddart	SACS
Duncan	Orr-Ewing	RSPB
Andrew	Bachell	JMT
Mark	Aitken	SEPA
Bruce	Wilson	SWT
Ronnie	Kippen	SGA
Additional Volunteer		

Davy	McCracken	SRUC
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3.2.12 Any member not on the group already but who wished to be was requested to contact the Director. **Action: Members**

3.2.13 Contact had already been received from the Mountaineering Council and consultation with the Scottish Tourist Alliance, Visit Scotland and woodland and forestry and renewable energy sectors was suggested.

3.2.14 A meeting / conference call of the Steering Group would be convened before Christmas to take this forward. **Action: Director**

4 Members' Briefings

4.1 Briefings had been provided prior to the meeting and were available on the [website](#).

4.2 Andrew Coupar, SNH provided an update on Peatland. In discussion the following points were raised:

4.2.1 The significance of horticultural peat extraction was discussed. There was acknowledgement that it was problematic and work to review its use was ongoing. It mainly occurred in the context of lowland raised bogs. Peatland degradation on blanket bog in the uplands was usually as a result of other issues and the problems cause, and the solutions, were often different.

4.2.2 The funding for peatland restoration through Peatland ACTION was £9.5million for 2018/19, with some other funding available through the SRDP.

4.2.3 The significance of peat used to produce scotch whisky was also raised. It was noted that the Scotch Whisky Association were on the National Peatland Group and had been engaged with peatland restoration work for some time. A meeting was planned to take place on Islay next spring which would consider the extraction of peat for whisky production.

4.3 The Director provided an update on Wildfire. In discussion the following points were raised.

4.3.1 As a result of the increased profile of wildfire a Scottish Risk Register was being established in addition to the UK Register.

4.3.2 SNH had been compiling a report of wildfire occurrences between 1st March and 6 September 2018. Sixty-six occurred in this period but it was noted that recording was limited to fires over 0.2 hectares, which might mean the figure is on the conservative side.

4.3.3 The wildfire information from 2018 would be compiled and circulated to forum members in the next couple of months **Action: Andrew Coupar**

4.3.4 Members were informed the next UK Wildfire Conference – Manage the Fuel, Reduce the Risk - would take place in Cardiff at the Principality Stadium on 20 - 21 November 2019.

- There might be scope for a feeder event in Scotland to report into the Welsh conference.

4.4 A written update on the work of the Independent Deer Working Group had been provided by Becky Shaw from SNH who was acting as Secretary to the Group. It was noted that due to Simon Pepper's unexpected and recent death, Andrew Barbour had taken over as Chair and the remaining members of the group were concluding the review. Richard Cooke, ADMG expanded by giving information on deer management issues across Scotland more generally.

4.4.1 The Statutory 3-year Scottish Government review of wild deer management was now underway. ADMG's initial assessment of progress showed that most DMGs were now producing sound, collaborative deer management plans, and that many went beyond this to include consideration of the wider habitat and other types of land use.

4.4.2 The number of deer groups continued to increase.

4.4.3 Pressures were greatest on the periphery of Deer Management Group areas but farming and game management and forestry areas had worked together incredibly well and the collaborative system was expanding.

4.4.4 The Lowland Deer Network had started in 2011 and was progressing but struggled to some extent because of the more fragmented land use pattern and were further behind the uplands in their collaborative approach.

4.4.5 The Lowland Deer Panel set up by SG should highlight the need for more information on where deer were and where the resources were in terms of managing them. The highest number of deer management qualifications was in the central belt.

4.4.6 The Scottish Venison Partnership had the support of Cabinet Secretary Fergus Ewing. They had a strategy to develop the industry and were likely to become an association.

4.4.7 There was some discussion about the push for non-lead ammunition to become the norm in the next 5 years. This was not likely to be affected by leaving the European Union.

4.5 The Director provided an update on Bracken Control. In particular it was noted that Asulam had been approved for 2019. Full details had been put onto the Bracken Control website www.brackencontrol.co.uk. It was also suggested that bracken was a major problem in much of Scotland's uplands and should be a topic for future Forum effort.

- 4.6 Anne Gray, member of the Working for Waders (WfW) Facilitation Group provided an update on the initiative.
- 4.6.1 The initiative had dual aims, firstly to reverse the decline in waders across Scotland and secondly, to explore a new model for collaborative working. As such its structure was different from many other such projects. It operated through three Action Groups – Raising Awareness, Information Needs and Collaborative Action, and a Facilitation Group.
- 4.6.2 The initiative had flexible membership and forum members were encouraged to contact the Administrator if at any stage they, or others they knew, wished to become involved.
- 4.6.3 The initiative had been made good progress during 2018. Initial visible effort was under the Raising Awareness strand of work, and it was noted that WfWs had a website, social media presence and had been promoted over the summer period at various events and fairs.
- 4.6.4 Work was also progressing with the other two strands – information needs and collaborative action, and all three strands of work were being supported in the meantime by an initial round of funding from SNH and through in-kind contributions by the organisations involved.
- 4.6.5 Shared resources were available from the Administrator, Anne Stoddart.
- 4.6.6 It was agreed that WfW should be an ongoing Agenda item for Forum meetings. **Action: Director**
- 4.7 An update on the Grouse Moor Management Group had been provided by Secretary Karen Rentoul.

4.7.1 Further details are provided on the website
www.gov.scot/groups/grouse-moor-management-group/

5 Governance Issues

- 5.1 The Minutes of last Meeting were approved.
- 5.2 The Draft Progress Report had been circulated and comments were welcomed.
- 5.2.1 This Report refers to work carried out in 2018 and will be issued in the name of the outgoing Chairman Lord Lindsay at the beginning of December. **Action: Administrator**
- 5.2.2 Members were asked to advise the Administrator of any changes in senior positions within their organisations in the last year prior to issue.
- 5.3 Financial Report and Annual Accounts
- 5.3.1 The annual accounts showed a slight loss in the subscription account.

- 5.3.2 Members agreed to the proposal to correct this by an increase in subscription fees to £350 per annum per organisation.
- 5.3.3 Invoices would be issued in November. Members were requested to settle these by the end of December 2018. **Action: Director**
- 5.3.4 The accounts had been checked by forum members Richard Cooke and Malcolm Younger.
- 5.3.5 Independent auditor accountants Carson & Trotter had inspected and approved the accounts.
- 5.3.6 Details would be circulated with the minutes. **Action: Director**

5.4 Summer Meeting 2019

- 5.4.1 A post Brexit theme had been proposed at the CWG Meeting and was approved by forum members.
- 5.4.2 A focus on farming management and input from NFUS and NSA would be explored.
- 5.4.3 Hugh Raven would be meeting the Chairman of NSA in the near future.

6 Scotland's Forestry Strategy 2019-29

- 6.1 Bob Frost, Policy and Project Manager Forestry Commission Scotland, provided a review of the purpose and content of the consultation.
- 6.2 The presentation could be found on the forum website.
- 6.3 In discussion the following points were raised:
 - 6.3.1 Forestry impacts on other land use interests should be acknowledged in the strategy.
 - 6.3.2 Strategies from the 1980s had a significant adverse effect on land values. The new strategy must guard against unintended consequences and demonstrate that lessons from the past have been learned.
 - 6.3.3 Means of achieving collaboration should be considered, for example, to mitigate the potential impact of land owner planting decisions on neighbouring land.
 - 6.3.4 The Forestry, Land Use Strategy and Agricultural Strategy sat in isolation. No duty of integration was required and there was a gap in linkages.
 - The Deer Management groups referred to land management plans as opposed to deer management plans. The point was made that terminology could alter the mindset towards integration.

- 6.4 It was agreed that member organisations should submit individual responses to the consultation.
- 6.5 A short generic response on behalf of the whole forum would be submitted to emphasise the need to take into account wider land use and the need for the right tree in the right place.
- 6.5.1 A Draft would be produced and circulated to volunteers Tim Baynes, Bruce Wilson and Will Boyd-Wallis for comment before submission by the deadline of 29th November. **Action: Director**

7 AOB

- 7.1 Scottish Government were asked for an update on the three stakeholder meetings about hare culls.
- 7.1.1 SG were aware that there was a lot of interest in this. The new minister was giving consideration to the issues including the current status of the hare population, whether sufficient information was available and if action should be taken to regulate rather than change management.

8 Dates of meetings for 2019

Meeting	Date	Venue
CWG	Friday 8 th February	GWCT, Scone
Full Forum	Friday 1 st March	Dewars Centre, Perth
CWG	Friday 17 th May	BASC, Trochry
Full Forum Summer Meeting	Friday 7 th June	tbc
CWG	Friday 11 th October	RSPB, Edinburgh
Full Forum	Friday 1 st November	Dewars Centre, Perth

9 Succession of Chairman & Director

- 9.1 Lord Lindsay congratulated Hugh Raven and Anne Gray on their appointments as Chairman and Director and the new Chairman and Director were given the opportunity to address the forum.
- 9.2 Lord Lindsay and Simon Thorp were thanked for their contributions to the forum and presented with commemorative walking sticks and whisky by Colin Shedden on behalf of all forum members.

10 Summary of Actions

Ref	Item	Action
2.6.6	Arrange meeting of the PoMM Steering Group to develop in more detail the forward direction of the initiative	Simon Thorp
2.7.1	Members not already on the PoMM Steering Group to contact Director Anne Gray if they wished to join.	Members
3.2.12	Members not already on the Upland Manifesto Group to contact Director Anne Gray if they wished to join.	Members

3.2.14	Arrange meeting/conference call of Upland Manifesto Group before Christmas	Director
4.3.3	Circulate Wildfire Information from 2018 to forum members when available	Andrew Coupar
4.6.6	Working for Waders Initiative to become ongoing agenda item for forum meetings	Director
5.2.1	Circulate Annual Progress Report at beginning of December	Administrator
5.3.3	Issue membership Invoices in November	Director
6.3.6	Circulate financial details with Minutes	Director
6.5.1	Produce Draft forum response to forestry consultation. Circulate to Tim Baynes, Bruce Wilson and Will Boyd-Wallis for comment and submit by deadline of 29 th November	Director

ATTENDANCE**Forum**

Lord Lindsay	Chairman
Hugh Raven	Chairman designate
Simon Thorp	Director
Anne Gray	Director designate
Anne Stoddart	Administrator
Scott Newey	JHI
Malcolm Younger	RICS
Andrew Coupar	SNH
Ross Johnston	SNH
Tim Baynes	SL&E
Patrick Stirling-Aird	SRSG
Colin Shedden	BASC
Richard Cooke	ADMG
Julia Stoddart	SACS
Colin Edwards	FCS
Mick Kirkwood	Scottish Water (sub)
Bruce Wilson	SWT
Andrew Bachell	JMT
Richard Luxmoore	NTS
Hugh Dignon	SG
Will Boyd-Wallis	CNPA

Guests

Bob Frost	FCS
Rebekah Strong	SL&E

Apologies	
John Bruce	BDS
Davy McCracken	SRUC
Mark Aitken	SEPA
Duncan Orr-Ewing	RSPB
James Scott	Crofting Commission
John Reid	LL&TNPA
Jamie Farquhar	Confor
Jonathan Hall	NFUS
Jamie Stewart	SCA
Jared Stewart	SW
Chris Wernham	BTO
Ronnie Kippen	SGA
Alex Hogg	SGA