

Submitted to Future Grant Support for Forestry
Submitted on 2023-05-07 14:14:32

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?

Not sure

Please explain your answer in the text box.:

Grants for natural regeneration of forests/woodland purely for their ecosystem value must be supported with grants. Unsure whether grants are necessary/desirable for large blocks of commercial monoculture forestry of single non-native tree species.

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

Yes

Please explain your answer in the text box.:

Parity in financial support for creating natural ecosystems and for continuing to farm land for agricultural production.

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.:

Grants for allowing woodland/forest ecosystems to establish naturally, without artificial human involvement such as regimented tree planting, wherever possible. Especially in areas adjacent to established natural forest ecosystems, where the forest is enabled to expand outwards naturally.

Grants for the maintenance of native forests e.g. for the removal of non-native invasive species such as rhododendron and grey squirrels; grants for deer fencing to allow new trees to grow naturally.

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.:

I would like to see private investment in natural woodland ecosystems which exist for their intrinsic ecosystem value and not just the blocks of commercial forestry monocultures of a single non-native tree species.

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.:

Parity for farmers in the financial support they receive, between land used for agricultural production and land being allowed to remain as woodland ecosystems and/or regenerated into woodland ecosystems. Farmers could be focusing on natural woodland ecosystems as opposed to having involvement commercial forestry projects. The financial support for farmers could be dependent upon the control/eradication of non-native invasive species such as rhododendron and grey squirrels.

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?:

An emphasis on native species and natural, functioning ecosystems, not just a focus on the trees which are but one element of woodland ecosystems.

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, Support with cashflow

Are there others not listed above?:

Woodland creation and maintenance as a land use option within Rural Payment Single Application Forms, with Scrub as an eligible land use option attracting the same financial support as agricultural production, in keeping with what the Republic of Ireland's Department of Agriculture has introduced.

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.:

Grants for the initial costs in establishing the woodland such as deer fencing, as well as ongoing, long-term financial support for the existence of the woodland such as annual payments through the Rural Payments Single Application Form at a level equivalent to that received for agricultural production.

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.:

-

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.:

Annual, ongoing financial support through the Rural Payments Single Application Forms for the existence of woodland on farms, whether this is woodlands already in existence, or the creation or regeneration of more woodland. The support should be equivalent to that received for agricultural production, at least.

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.:

There could be a preference towards natural forest ecosystems in the vicinity of communities as opposed to blocks of commercial monoculture non-native trees.

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.:

-

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.:

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.:

Regeneration and expansion of native woodlands should be included with the Rural Payments Single Application Form as a land use eligible for receiving subsidy, of the same value as agricultural production is. Scrubland should also be classified as eligible for receiving subsidy, in line with what the Department of Agriculture in Ireland has introduced.

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?:

Some sort of wider or larger grant support for culling, in addition to grant support for deer fencing. Ecologist managed at a landscape level.

Small scale mixed land use?:

Some sort of grant support for culling, or some level of culling as a condition of grant support.

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

Please add your comments here.:

About you

What is your name?

Name:

[redacted]

What is your email address?

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?

No

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

I consent