

Submitted to Future Grant Support for Forestry
Submitted on 2023-03-02 23:07:12

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?

Yes

Please explain your answer in the text box.:

Yes, there should be support for landowners and tenants to plant trees, however, these need to be more targeted. The issue of additionality needs to be at the forefront of FGS schemes, many investment houses would be planting without grant support as land values and natural capital and carbon income comes on stream (as well as timber returns). Progress has been made on this with the woodland carbon code, but more could be done with the FGS

Direct land acquisition for woodland creation by the FLS should play a more central part in SG strategy; the state should also realise the future economic return.

In short: targeted grant support, with additionality given a higher weighting. More funding for state acquisition that delivers long-term value for money for the taxpayer.

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

Not sure

Please explain your answer in the text box.:

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.:

The support package needs to encourage more diverse silvicultural methods, current levels of support for low-impact silviculture are insufficient.

The LTFP process could be supported by specialized staff; there needs to be more professional support available for land managers & agents. Scottish forestry needs more operational expertise on the ground; in general policy and guidance is in place, but it is not fully succeeding in transitioning to on-the-ground advice and action.

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.:

Large schemes that use private finance can be hugely profitable, there should be mechanism for ensuring a proportion of these capital gains is returned to the public purse.

In short: Yes there should be flexibility, but in return there needs to be a taxpayer stake in future economic returns.

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.:

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?:

The grant scheme can support this by increasing the incentive for diverse productive woodland and incentivising active management. The grant scheme also needs to support the fledgling productive hardwood sector; as well as supporting private businesses in procuring machinery & training that will enable a diversity of silvicultural practices (so we are geared towards clearfell & thinning operations)

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.

Knowing where to get reliable advice, Support with cashflow

Are there others not listed above?:

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.:

Much greater involvement from Scottish forestry staff in providing advice; small woodland owners should be able to seek free advice from the Scottish Forestry at some level. Agent fees are high & quality varies greatly. Well-trained woodland officers could offer more impartial advice at the outset; this also would incentive agents as they would be dealing with a more informed client.

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.:

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.:

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?

Yes

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.:

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?:

Small scale mixed land use?:

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

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Individual

What is your organisation?

Organisation:

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