

Submitted to Future Grant Support for Forestry
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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.:

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.:

a better agroforestry grant with more flexibility: the current grant only allows for trees to be integrated with sheep or crops, but not cattle, chickens, small scale food growing, orchards etc. The grant rate available doesn't come close to covering the cost of the protection that is specified in the requirements. It covers less than a quarter of the actual costs.

Trees should not be an ineligible feature for grant funding on agricultural land. It disincentivises farmers from establishing parkland style grazing areas, tree shelter within fields, wood pastures and tree fodder areas. It also encourages the removal of trees.

Funding should be available for farmers and foresters to attend joint training courses and field visits to learn about the benefits of integrating the two land uses.

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.:

Better funding for natural regeneration and deer control should be available to help protect our existing native woodlands and help them to expand without carbon intensive fencing, ground prep and planting.

Funding should be reduced or removed for any monoculture planting or restocking. These forests are less resilient and less able to withstand extreme weather events.

The grant model should allow for woodlands to be planted more gradually over 10 - 20 years to create more structural diversity in new woodlands, making them more wind firm and resilient.

More funding should be available for the management of existing woodlands to allow LISS management to create more resilient woodlands.

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.:

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?:

No funding should be awarded for monoculture planting or restocking. Currently up to 75% can be planted as sitka spruce, this should be significantly reduced.

Better funding should be available for LISS management to make clearfell a less appealing option. Clearfell creates ideal conditions for pests such as weevil to breed. More gradual thinning with natural regen would reduce this.

More training for continuous cover and LISS forestry.

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, Flexibility within options, Support with cashflow, Information on how current land use could continue with trees integrated throughout

Are there others not listed above?:

Trees should not be an ineligible feature on the rural payments farming grant system. They can improve grazing land and protect livestock and crops from harsh weather.

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.:

An easier grant application system for small scale woodlands.

Make an simple, easy to apply for grant like the South of Scotland Tree Planting Grant available nationally.

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.:

Funding for paths, signage and infrastructure in more areas, not just WIAT areas.

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.:

Funding for rangers to lead walks and community events in privately owned forests.

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.:

More public information/media campaigns to inform people about forestry and why certain management techniques are carried out.

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?:

Include deer control and natural regen promotion (e.g. through ground disturbance and seed dispersal) as capital costs.

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.:

Include better funding support for deer control and natural regen to allow our existing woodlands to survive and expand.

Easier to apply for grant support for rhododendron removal - the current requirement to map each individual bush is not practical.

Include grant support for grey squirrel control, habitat creation and protection of existing habitats in the FGS system.

Change system to reward applicants for protecting badgers stets, birds nests etc rather than the presence of such features resulting in a loss of plantable area and therefore funding.

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?:

Provide an annual deer management payment grant option.

Small scale mixed land use?:

Provide an annual deer management payment grant option.

More research in to non tube deterants such as Trico.

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

Please add your comments here.:

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What is your organisation?

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