

Response ID ANON-ECNN-E5T4-6

Submitted to **Scottish Forestry Corporate Plan Consultation**

Submitted on **2020-02-05 15:46:13**

Questions

1 To what extent do you agree that the Corporate Plan provides a good introduction to the organisation, its role and the structure of Scottish Forestry?

Agree strongly

Comments:

We strongly agree that the Corporate Plan provides a good introduction to the role and structure of Scottish Forestry and agree that it contributes to the delivery of Scotland's National Framework. The forest industry is a vital part of Scotland's rural economy and our forestry and woodlands provide important opportunities to meet environmental objectives, for people to enjoy nature and the outdoors and for wildlife to flourish. We are therefore in agreement that the plan will in particular make a strong contribution to the national outcomes for Environment, Economy and Health.

2 To what extent do you agree with the Purpose contained in the Corporate Plan?

Disagree slightly

Comments:

SLE welcomes and supports all efforts to promote and develop sustainable management and expansion of forestry in Scotland. We feel for maximum impact, the purpose should be adjusted and include "integrated land use" – recognizing the opportunity for better integration with other land uses. This is something that is becoming increasingly important in meeting environmental challenges and commitments and we feel it should sit more prominently in the Plan.

3 To what extent do you agree with Strategic Objective 1 as a priority for our work over the next three years?

Agree strongly

Comments:

We fully support the 50-year vision set out in Scotland's Forestry Strategy and the identified objectives and we welcome the long-term approach taken in the strategy. It is appropriate that the actions of this strategy are incorporated into the Corporate Plan and that Scottish Forestry leads on the coordination delivery (and indeed any monitoring) of this.

4 To what extent do you agree with Strategic Objective 2 as a priority for our work over the next three years?

Agree strongly

Comments:

SLE is supportive of this objective. It is important that those delivering the policy, regulation, support and advice functions are skilled, knowledgeable and have practical forestry experience. Many members with an interest in forestry see the beneficial links between practical forestry management and the functions that exist within Scottish Forestry. We believe it is important that practical forestry experience is considered as an essential criterion in the application process.

We believe it also important to consider how future employees are developed through the industry such that some will be suitable candidates for future roles in policy, regulation, support etc. Consideration also needs to be given to how that expertise, once gained, are retained to ensure a good supply of experienced governance officers.

5 To what extent do you agree with priorities associated with this Strategic Objective?

Agree strongly

Comments:

We agree strongly that it is essential Scottish Forestry is a supportive, innovative and inclusive organization and should be an exemplar in demonstrating best practice. We hope the Corporate Plan will greatly assist Scottish Forestry staff to take an enabling approach which takes into account key principles including transparency, consistency, proportionality and accountability to assist businesses and help deliver sustainable economic growth within a more practical and user-friendly regulatory framework for productive and non-productive forestry.

6 To what extent do you agree with the activities associated with this Strategic Objective?

Agree strongly

Comments:

Points 1-3 as per comments above.

SLE welcomes point 4 and we look forward to continuing to work positively with Scottish Forestry. We are pleased to see a necessary focus on maintaining and building cross-organisational working which is vital in order to deliver the desired integration with other land uses. We believe there is opportunity for improved integration with other land uses – something as highlighted in response to question 2 we feel is becoming increasingly important in meeting environmental

challenges and commitments. We therefore support and welcome the above.

7 To what extent do you agree with Strategic Objective 3 as a priority for our work over the next three years?

Agree strongly

Comments:

No comment

8 To what extent do you agree with priorities associated with this Strategic Objective?

Agree strongly

Comments:

It is important processes are enabling, with a focus on co-operative working, advice and facilitation.

9 To what extent do you agree with the activities associated with this Strategic Objective?

Agree strongly

Comments:

As already mentioned, it is important that processes and systems are enabling and are not overly bureaucratic and do not act as barrier to activity. Due to the complexity of the Forestry Grant Scheme, it is often the case that SLE members need to employ a consultant to assist with the paperwork which comes at an extra cost.

SLE members have highlighted that in recent times FCS/SF have not been wholly successful with missed planting targets, restocking obligations not always enforced and grant systems being unnecessarily bureaucratic. It is important lessons are learnt from previously poorly designed systems and appropriate resources are in place to support delivery.

Consideration needs to be given to streamlining the FGS process and making it more appealing so that it better attracts a greater variety of applications including from those wishing to engage in smaller planting schemes.

10 Performance

What do you think are the important areas we should include as we develop KPIs to measure performance against this Corporate Plan?:

We would welcome the opportunity to comment on any detailed KPI proposals once available.

We believe the following would be important areas to measure.

- Grant processing times
- FGS option applied for
- Submitted V submitted not yet approved applications
- Claimed options
- Reviewing climate change reporting particularly in relation to carbon (forest and peatland) would be welcome as an enabling exercise for the private sector to engage with a wider range of global off-set market mechanisms that are currently unavailable.

11 Equality and Diversity

Do you think any of the outcomes and activities in the Corporate Plan will impact differently on people who share protected characteristics? (for example, in relation to their age, disability, gender, pregnancy/maternity, marital status, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief):

No

12 Are there any actions we should consider in relation to our outcomes and activities to ensure we are inclusive and advancing opportunities for people from different equality groups or for people from different socio-economic backgrounds?

Are there any actions we should consider in relation to our outcomes and activities to ensure we are inclusive and advancing opportunities for people from different equality groups or for people from different socio-economic backgrounds?:

Just the points we raise to question 5.

It is important Scottish Forestry staff take an enabling approach which takes into account key principles including transparency, consistency, proportionality and accountability to assist and help deliver sustainable economic growth.

13 Please use this space to provide any other comments you think are relevant to the Corporate Plan.

Please use this space to provide any other comments you think are relevant to the Corporate Plan.:

In order for Scottish Forestry to meet its objectives the following will be key considerations:

1. Are current budgets for the Forestry Grant Scheme sufficient to meet Scottish Government's tree planting targets?
2. Consideration needs to be given to the organisation of the carbon market within the UK/Europe
3. Scottish Forestry's administration of the grant scheme - the incompetent delivery of forest grants systems in recent years has impaired the ability of private sector to meet government objectives rather than facilitated.

Lastly, in light of the current climate emergency and economic uncertainty, we feel it is important the plan recognises the importance and need going forward to establish much closer working relationships between regions and devolved administrations of the UK.

About you

What is your name?

Name:

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What is your email address?

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Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

Organisation

What is your organisation?

Organisation:

Scottish Land and Estates

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

Publish response with name

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government 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 Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Yes

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

Evaluation

Please help us improve our consultations by answering the questions below. (Responses to the evaluation will not be published.)

Matrix 1 - How satisfied were you with this consultation?:

Very dissatisfied

Please enter comments here.:

Matrix 1 - How would you rate your satisfaction with using this platform (Citizen Space) to respond to this consultation?:

Slightly dissatisfied

Please enter comments here.:

It would be helpful if there was an edit function once the response has been submitted.