

Response ID ANON-VEPG-2GRB-Y

Submitted to Future Grant Support for Forestry
Submitted on 2023-05-17 16:13:56

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.:

Whether developed discretely or inside an overall package of land support, the woodland grant scheme must clearly identify priority planting areas and take into consideration other land use priority objectives (e.g. agricultural production). Identifying priority areas for woodland planting could also allow for the differentiation of grant payments (e.g. higher grant rates for peri-urban woodlands that allow community access).

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 grant rates offered for the planting of native mixed and broadleaved woodlands should increase to reflect the greater benefits (including biodiversity benefits) and resilience of these woodlands over single species coniferous plantations. Additional operating grant payments could be considered for woodland projects that undertake specific actions that contribute to increase their resilience to climate change.

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,

Yes

Please explain your answer in the text box.:

Yes, the grant scheme should evolve to provide the flexibility to maximise opportunities to blend private finance with public funding. The use of operational grants (i.e. paying for the maintenance costs of woodlands in the early years of a woodland), and potentially payments for outcomes, could be beneficial to create room for private finance in the market.

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.:

A new funding package could include additional payments to incentivise a range of actions that create additional climate adaptation, and other co-benefits such as:

- Creating better habitat connectivity by expanding existing native woodlands and habitats for native species such as red squirrels;
- Enhancing water quality and/or reducing flood risk, and/or, for instance by planting riparian woodlands; and
- Creating woodlands close to populations and providing access to the public for these woodlands to provide social benefits.

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?:

Without being a requirement, resilient management practises should be incentivised with higher grants. Operating grants and payments for outcomes could be used to incentivise and reward resilient management practises.

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, Clearer guidance on grant options, Information on how current land use could continue with trees integrated throughout

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.:

The grant scheme could consider the introduction of higher grants for projects below a certain size to provide further support alongside the existing Small Woodland Loan Scheme. A cap on grants for commercial coniferous projects above a certain size could also be considered.

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.:

- Designate priority planting areas in peri-urban locations where woodlands would be eligible for a higher grant rate.
- Provide grant support for urban trees planted for Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems projects.
- Provide support to community-owned woodlands in urban and peri-urban 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.:

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.:

The woodland grant scheme could create a specific category of grants for community-owned woodland projects.

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.:

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?:

The grant payments rates could be limited in function of deer densities and operating payments conditional to deer densities remaining below a certain level.

Small scale mixed land use?:

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?

Organisation

What is your organisation?

Organisation:

Finance Earth

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?

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