

*Your farm's future: Trees an option and opportunity?*

*Why and how they can benefit your business*

*Integrating Trees Network, Online, 26<sup>th</sup> November 2025*



# Integrating trees and woodlands onto a hill farm

Davy McCracken

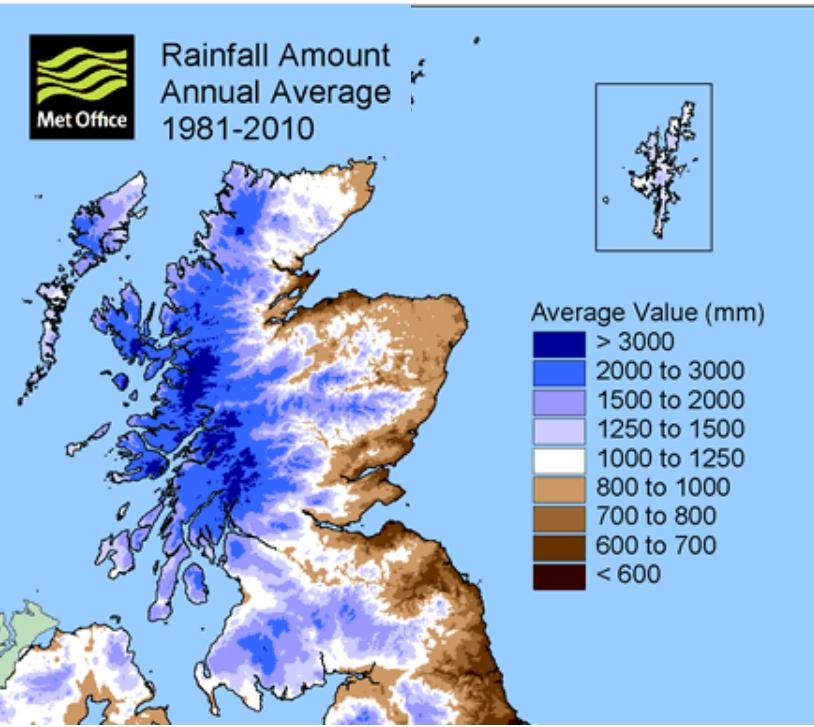
*Deputy Head of School of Natural & Social Sciences: Knowledge Exchange & Innovation  
Head of Hill & Mountain Research Centre*



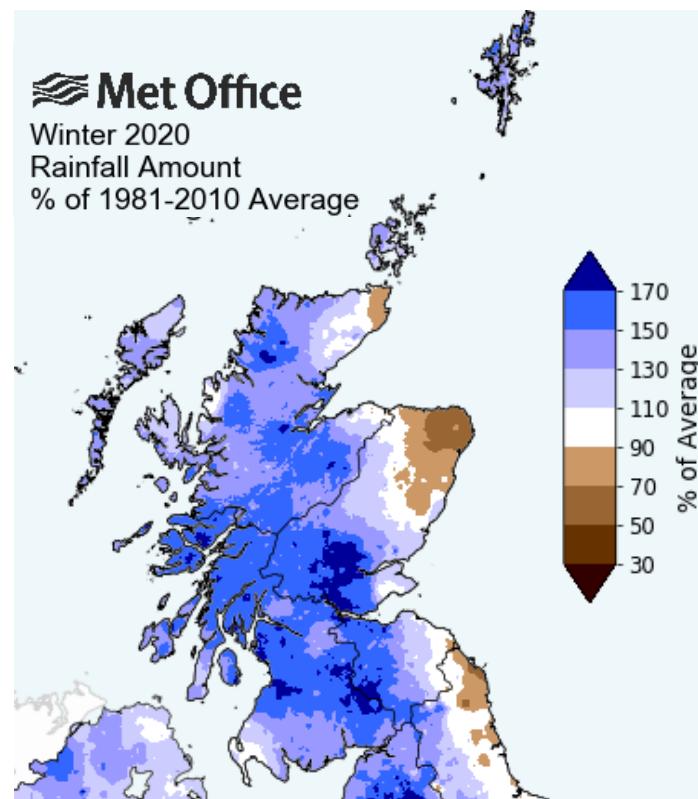
*Leading the way in Agriculture and Rural Research, Education and Consulting*

# Scottish weather is changing

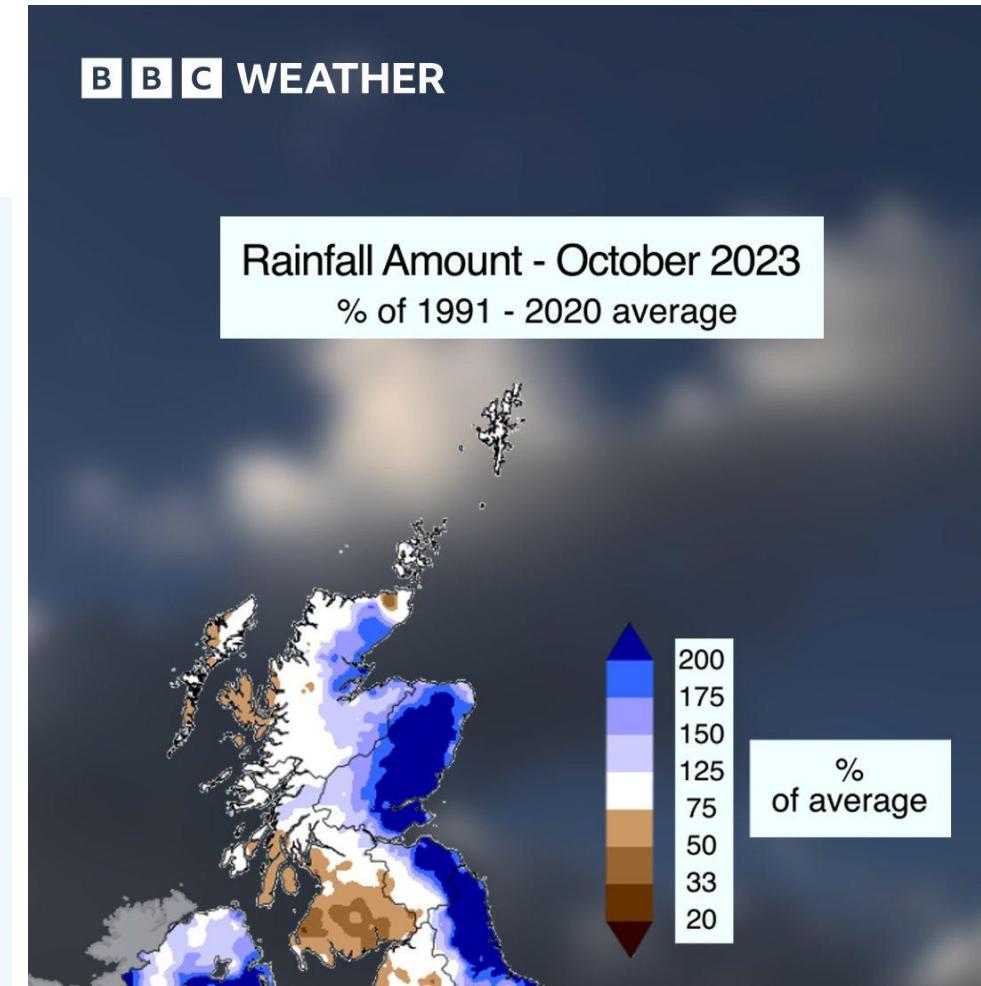
Very wet



And getting  
wetter



With more extreme events



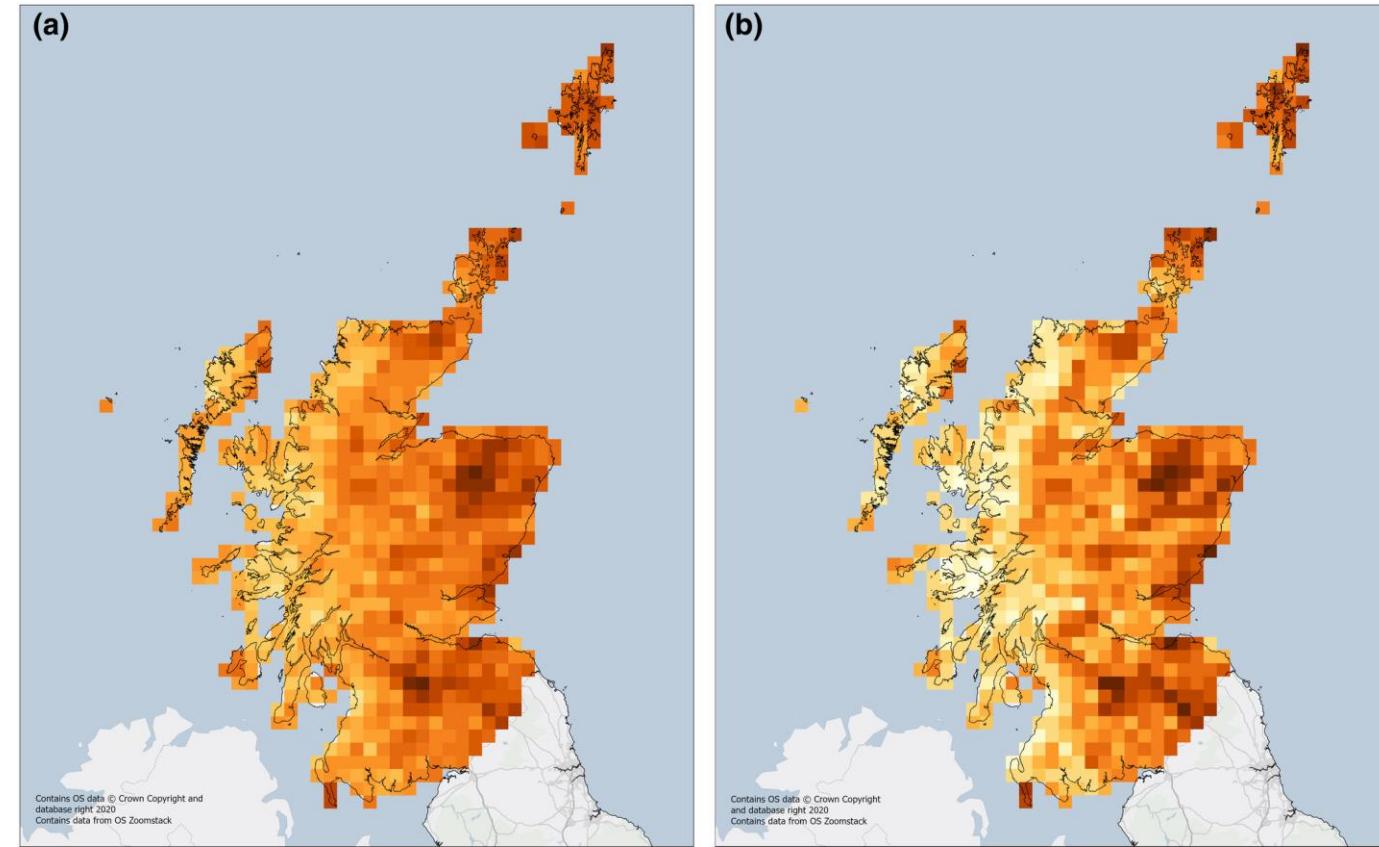
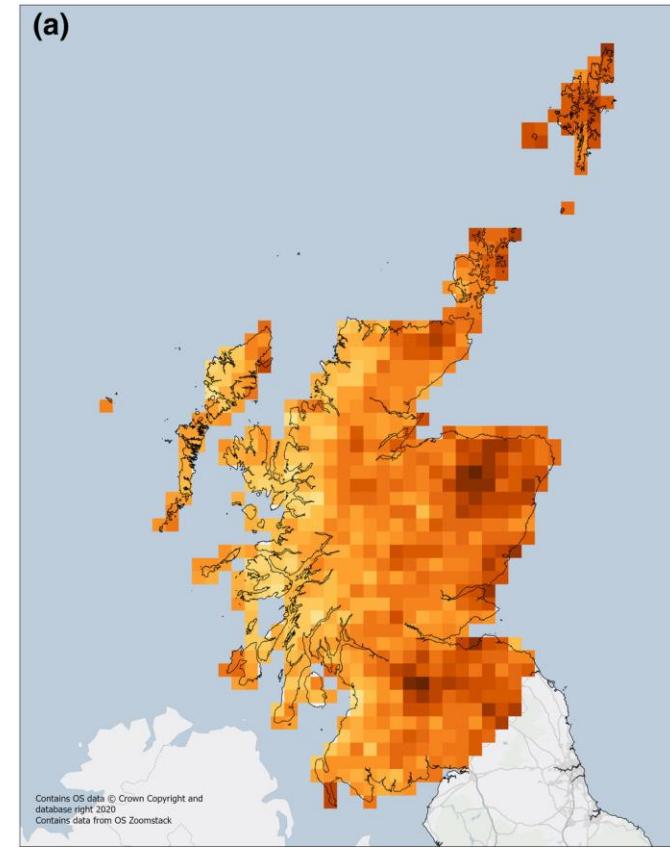
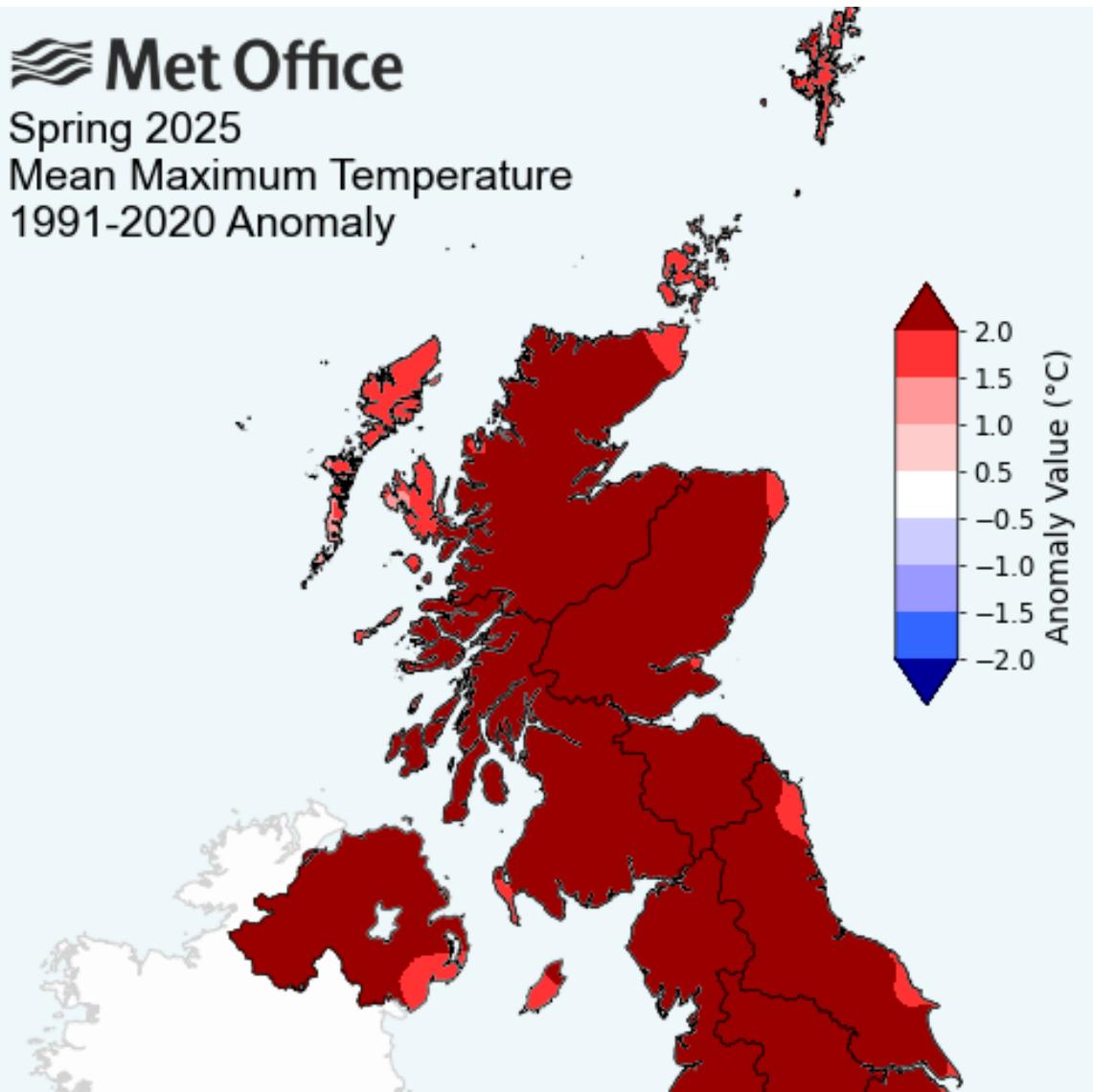
SRUC

# Scottish weather is changing



Met Office

Spring 2025  
Mean Maximum Temperature  
1991-2020 Anomaly

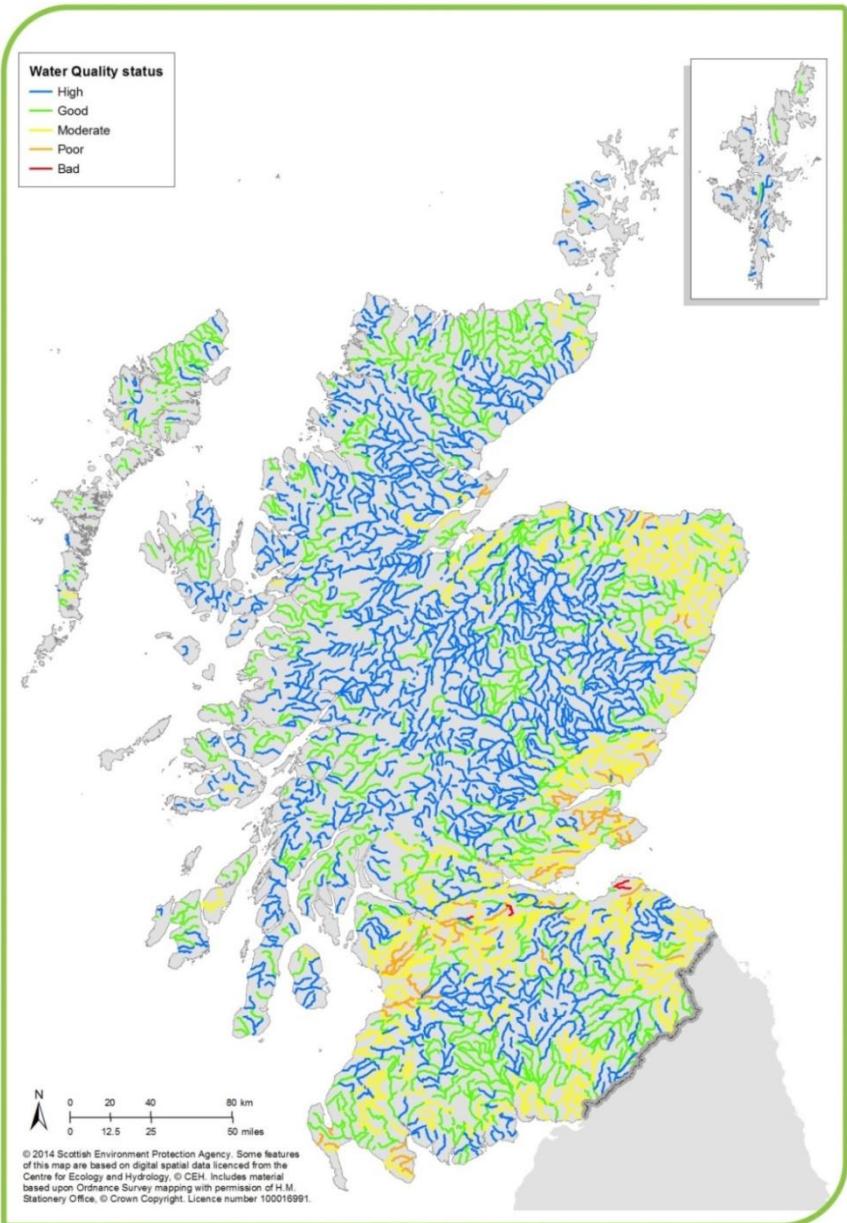


Projected increases in extreme drought frequency and duration by 2040 affect specialist habitats and species in Scotland

Ecol Sol and Evidence, Volume: 4, Issue: 3, First published: 03 August 2023, DOI: (10.1002/2688-8319.12256)

<https://besjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/2688-8319.12256>

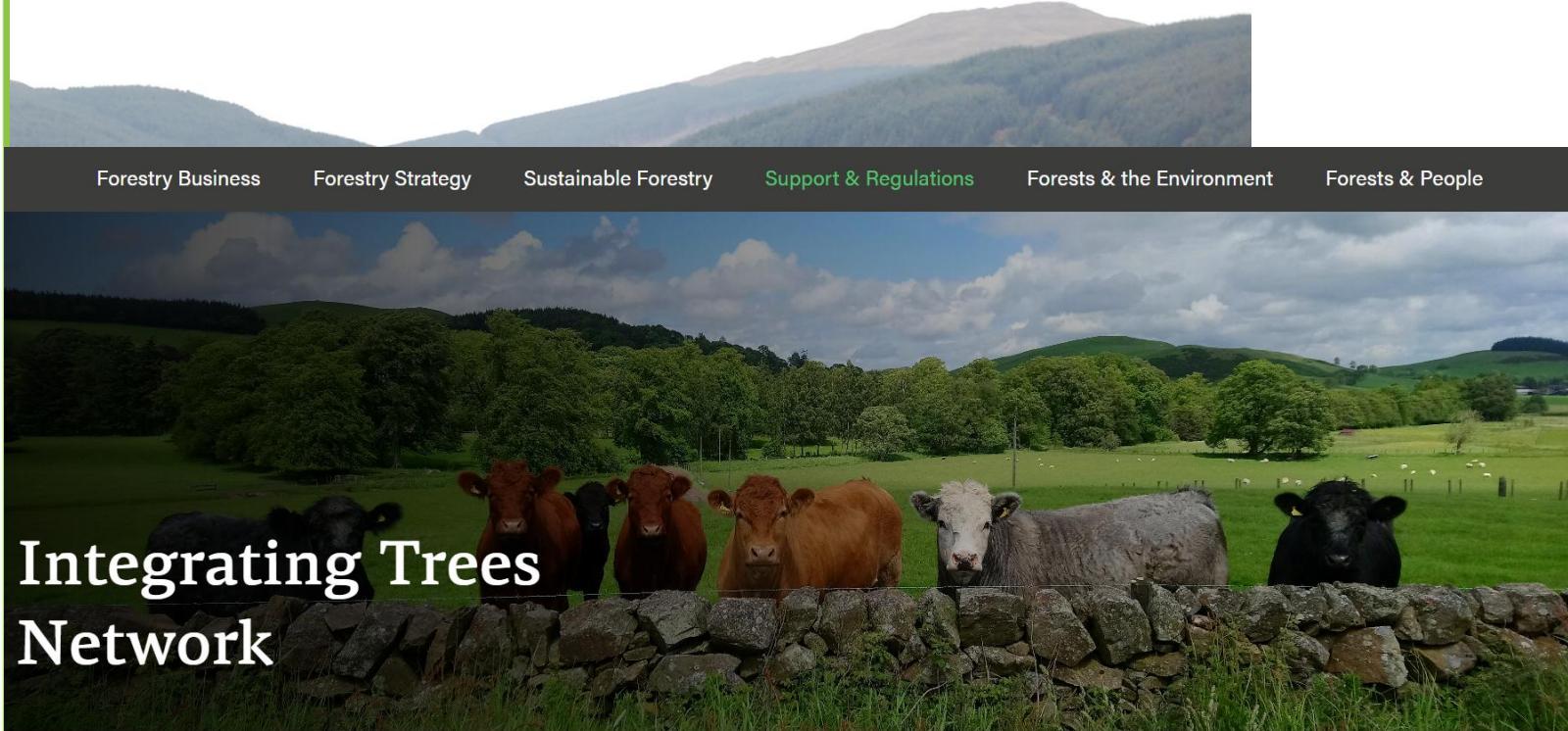
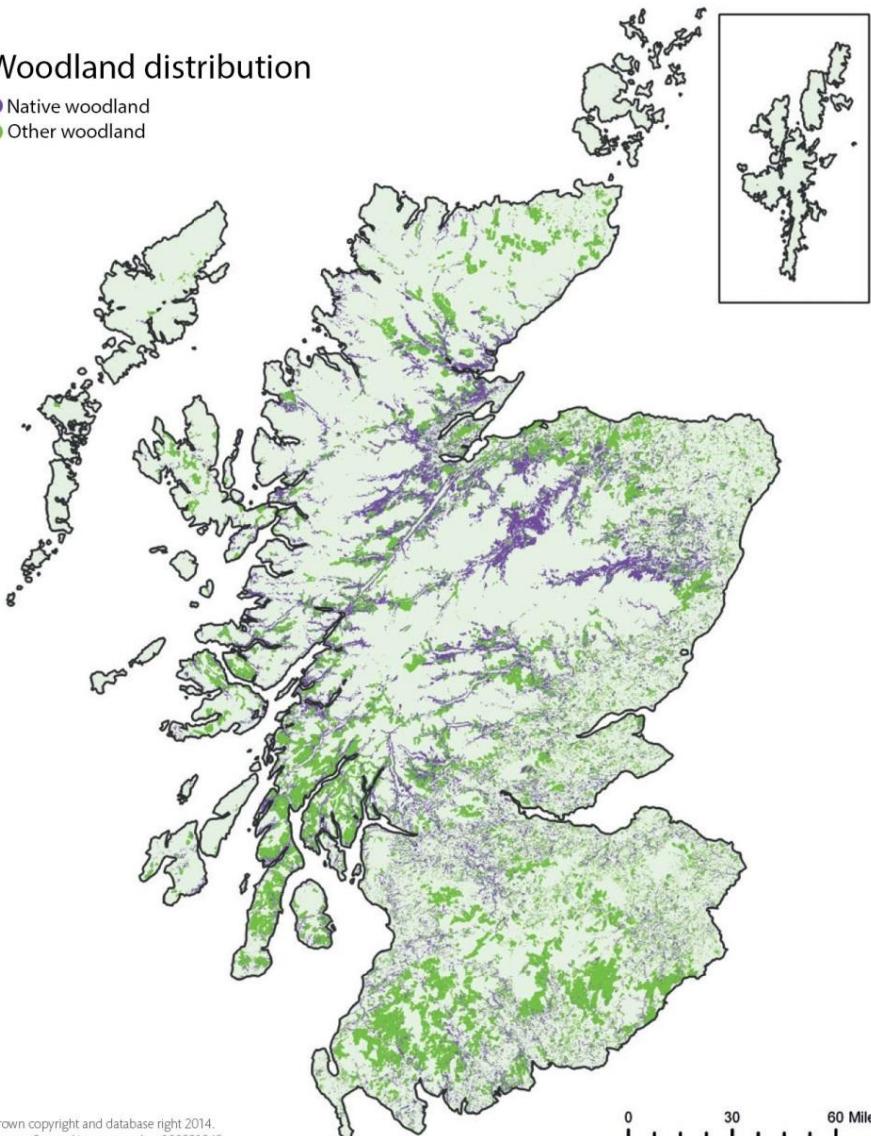
# Water Quality



# Opportunities

Woodland distribution

- Native woodland
- Other woodland



# Benefits

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Crops and soils

Environment

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## Woodland Creation

There are many reasons why investing in woodland can help your farm business. The benefits include:

- Shelter for livestock and crops
- Biosecurity for livestock
- Improvements in biodiversity
- Reduction of diffuse pollution & bank stabilisation
- Cash inflow from timber crops
- Carbon sequestration
- Sports/leisure diversification

In this section, we have gathered the information you need to help get you started. Our podcast discusses the Top Ten questions our foresters get asked about woodland creation & management.

<https://www.fas.scot/crops-soils/farm-woodlands/woodland-creation/>

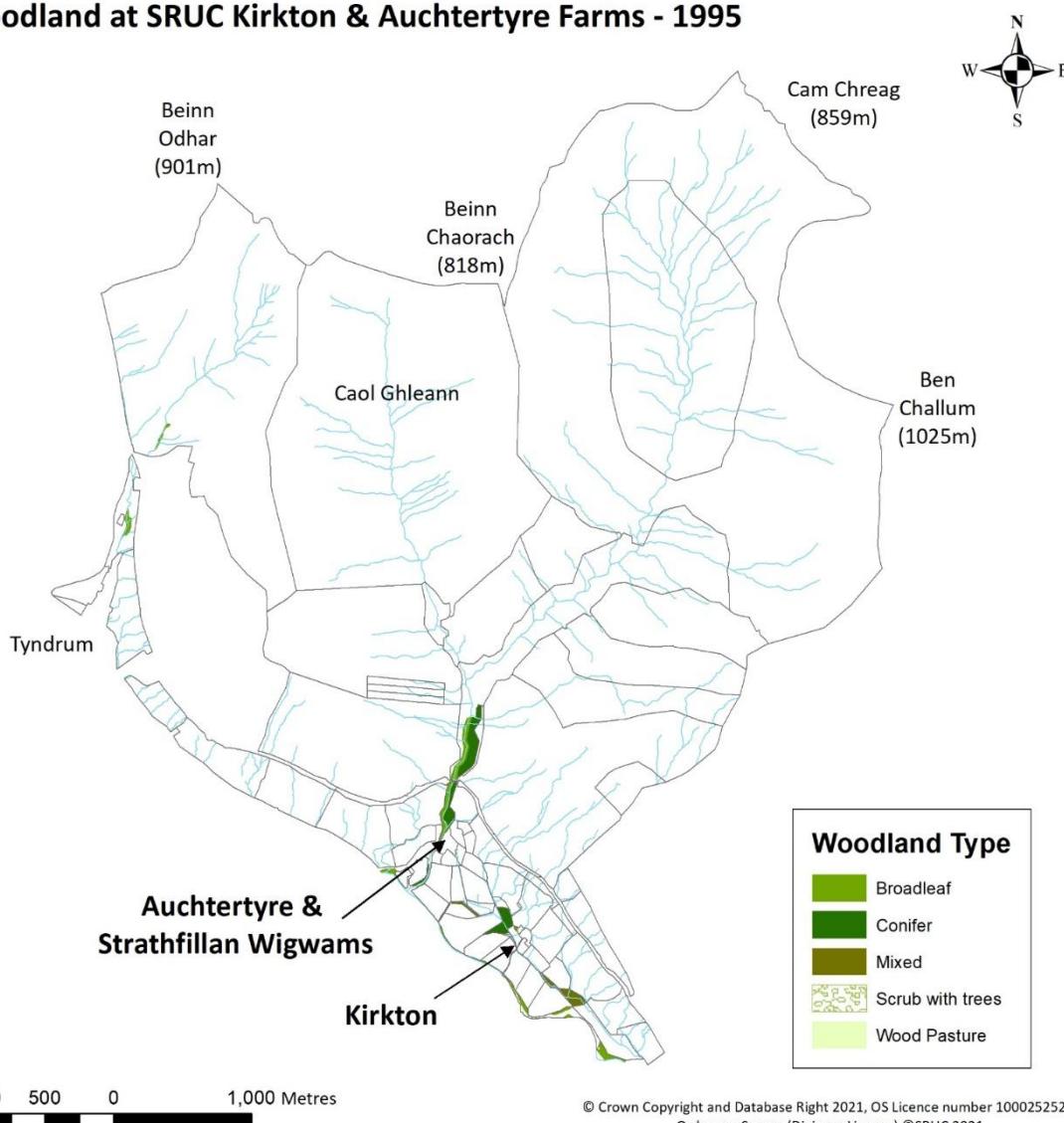


Farm Woodland Information Note: Accessing the Forestry Grant Scheme for Woodland Creation

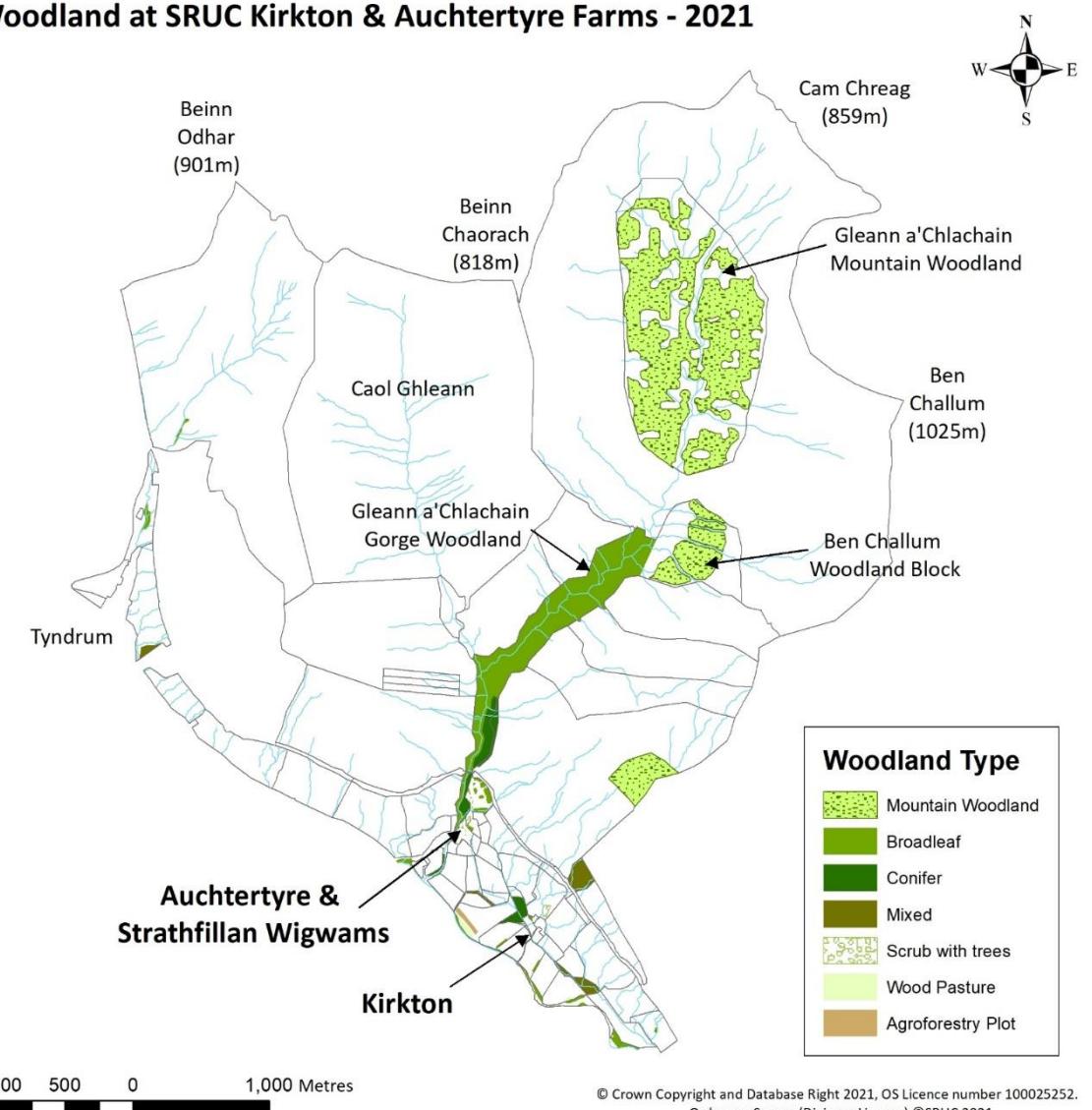
# Integrating trees and woodland into a hill farm



Woodland at SRUC Kirkton & Auchtertyre Farms - 1995



Woodland at SRUC Kirkton & Auchtertyre Farms - 2021



# Improving biodiversity on a hill farm: Scrub



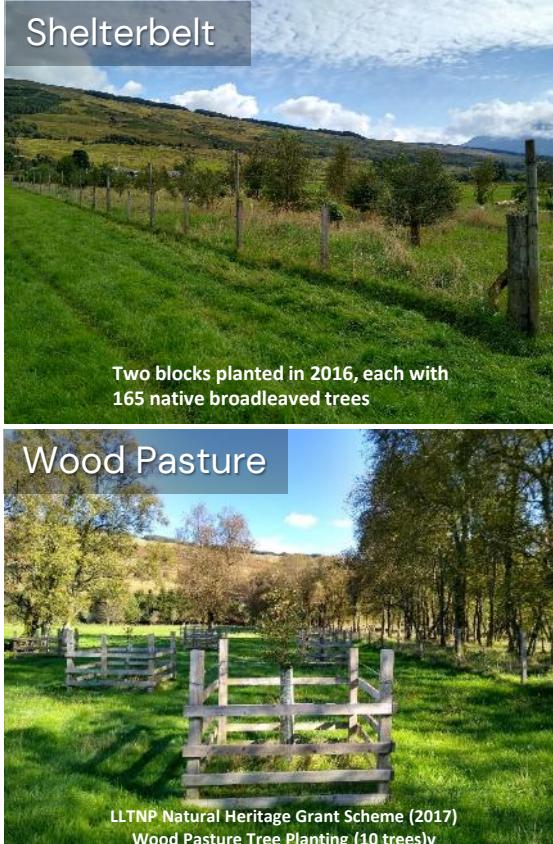
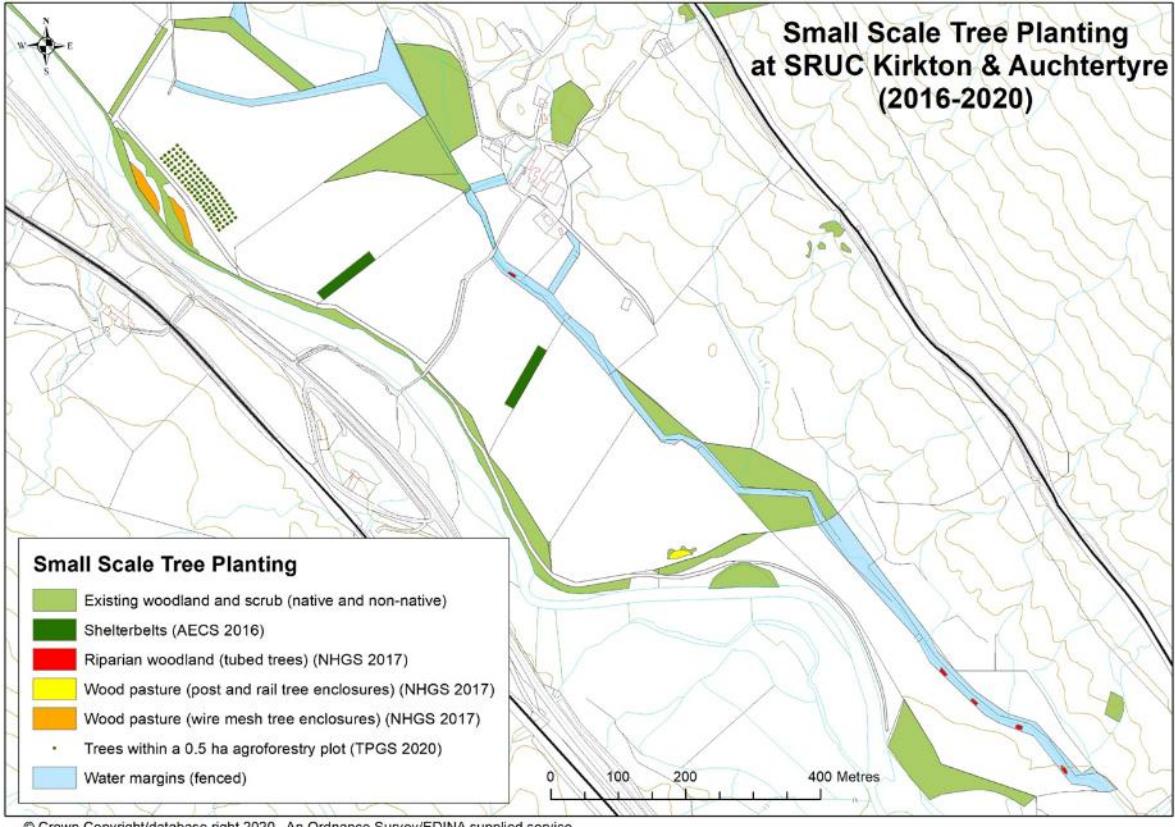
Gorse scrub with scattered trees – Stock fenced as part of the  
Countryside Premium Scheme in 1997.

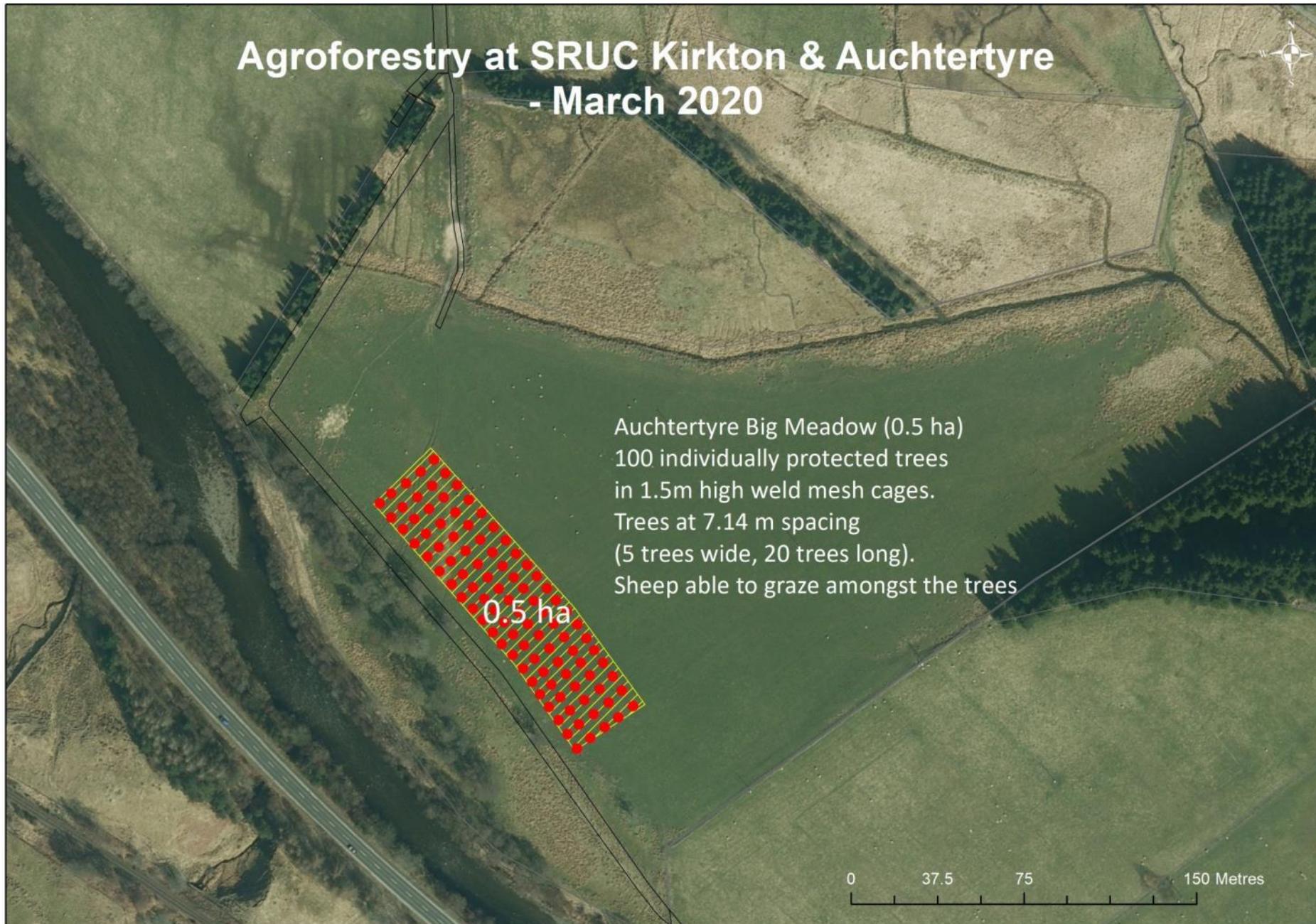


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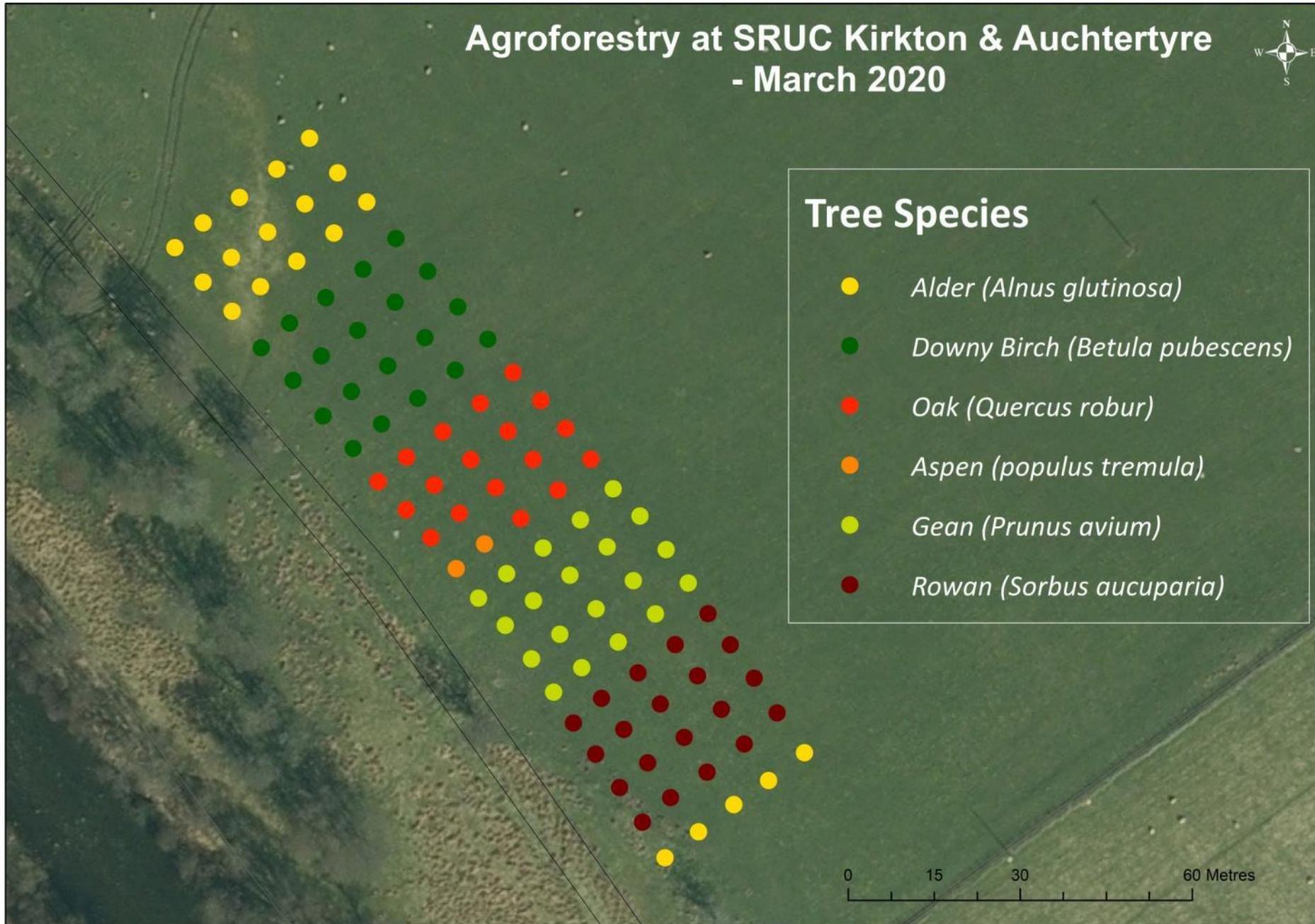
# Improving biodiversity on a hill farm: Inbye Woodland



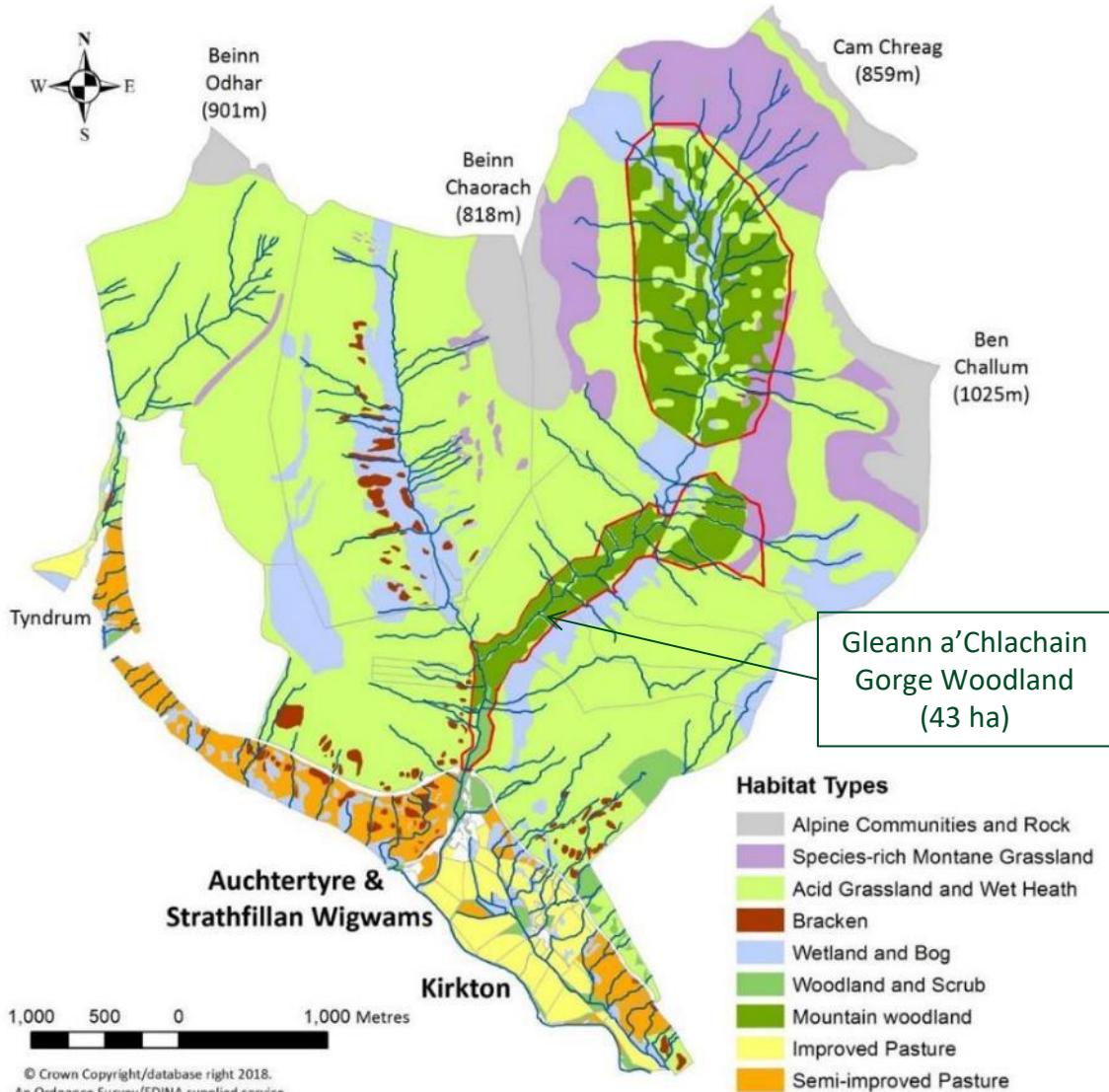


# Agroforestry at SRUC Kirkton & Auchtertyre

- March 2020



# Improving biodiversity on a hill farm: Mountain Woodland & Scrub



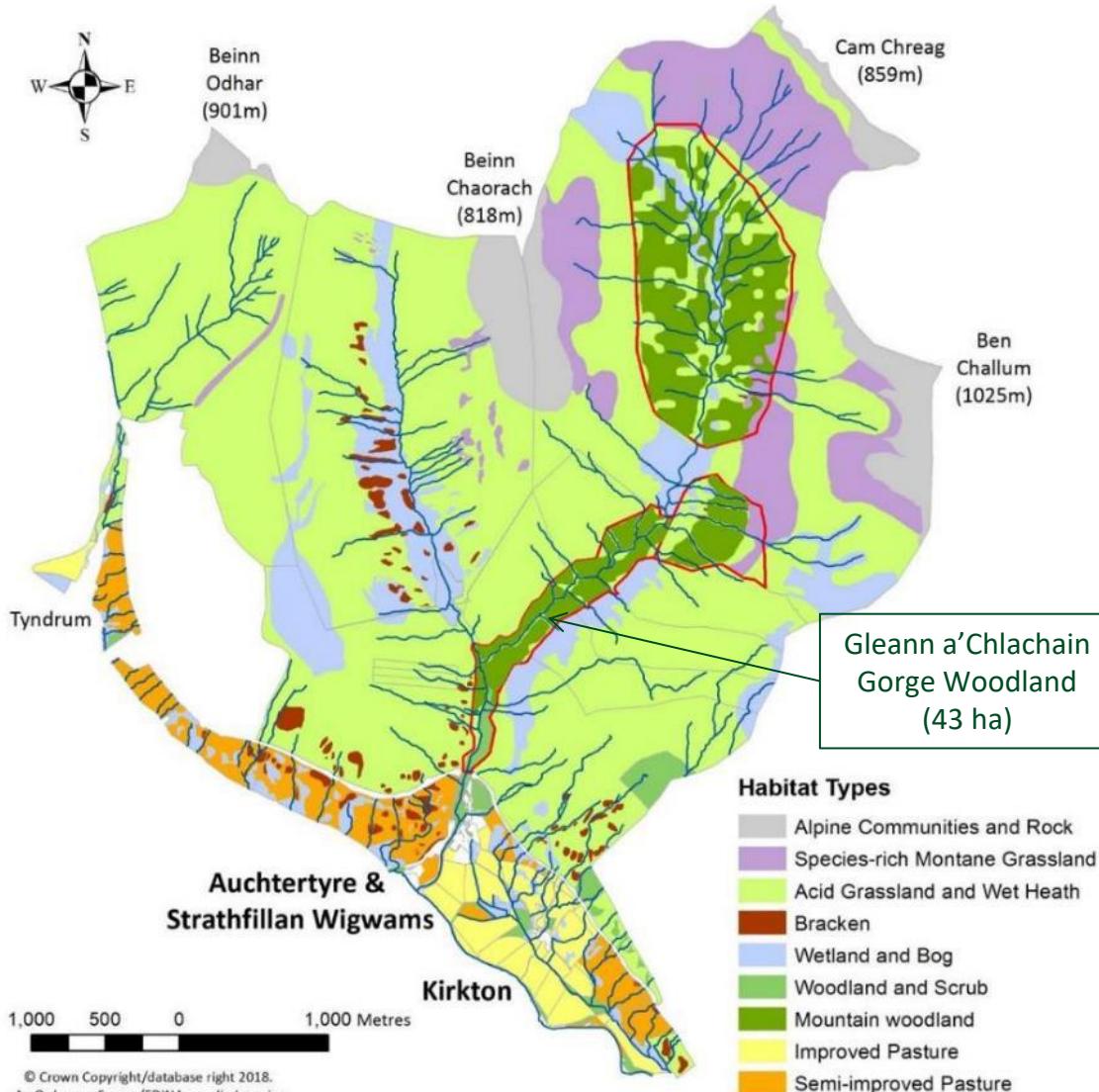
Gorge Woodland (October 2021)

# Trees planted in the in the Allt Gleann a'Chlachain Gorge Woodland and Gleann a'Chlachain Mountain Woodlands (260 ha)

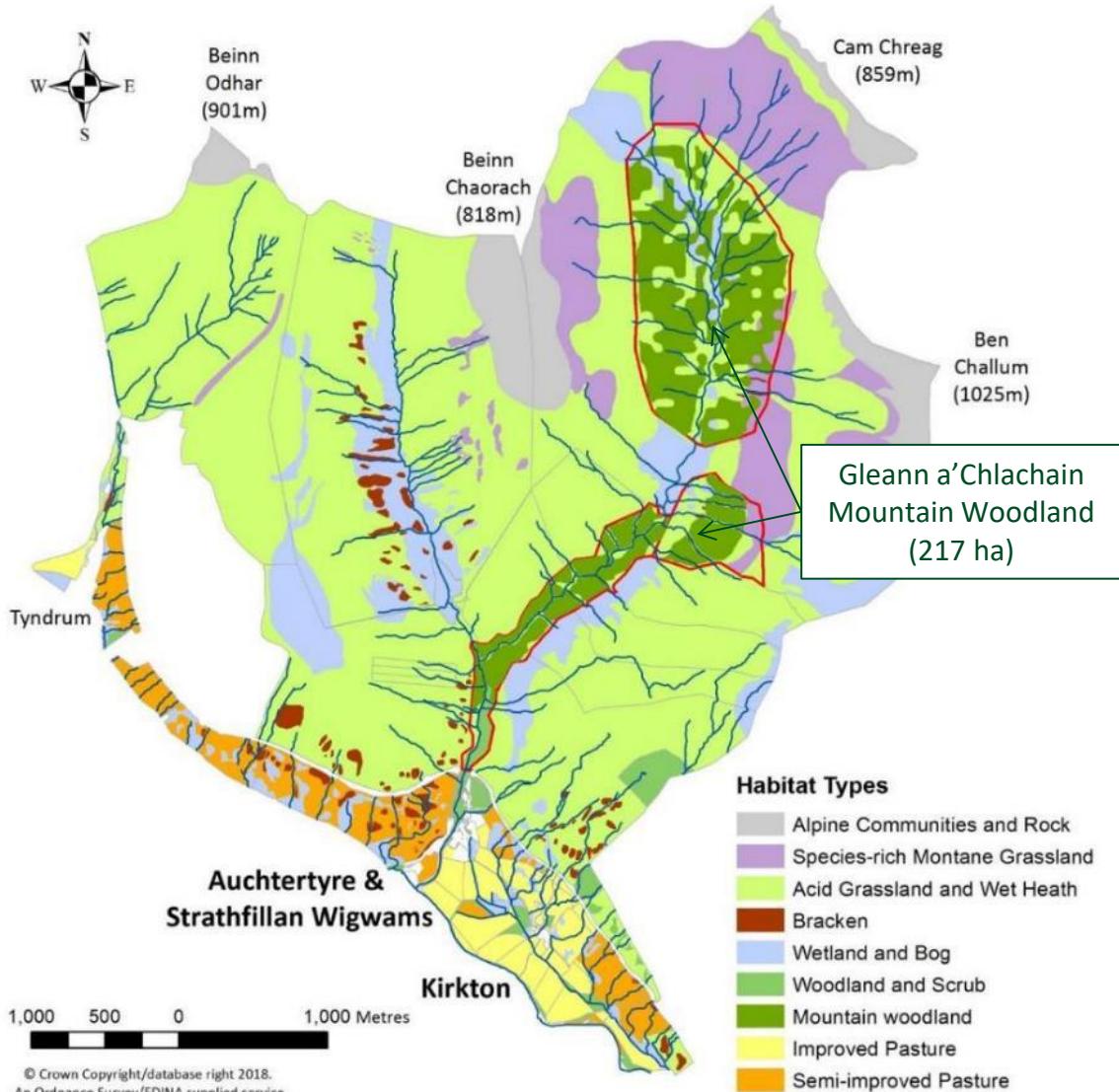
Latin Name	English Name	Total	Percentage
<i>Betula pubescens</i>	Downy Birch	219710	45.35%
<i>Betula pendula</i>	Silver Birch	63505	13.11%
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	Scot's Pine	49300	10.18%
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	Common Alder	43765	9.03%
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	Rowan	38110	7.87%
<i>Salix cinerea</i>	Grey Willow	23250	4.80%
<i>Salix caprea</i>	Goat Willow	17505	3.61%
<i>Quercus petraea</i>	Sessile Oak	8850	1.83%
<i>Salix aurita</i>	Eared Willow	6250	1.29%
<i>Salix myrsinifolia</i>	Dark-leaved Willow	5010	1.03%
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ash	4060	0.84%
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel	3300	0.68%
<i>Populus tremula</i>	Aspen	1110	0.23%
<i>Salix lapponum</i>	Downy Willow	750	0.15%
<b>Total</b>		<b>484,475</b>	<b>100%</b>



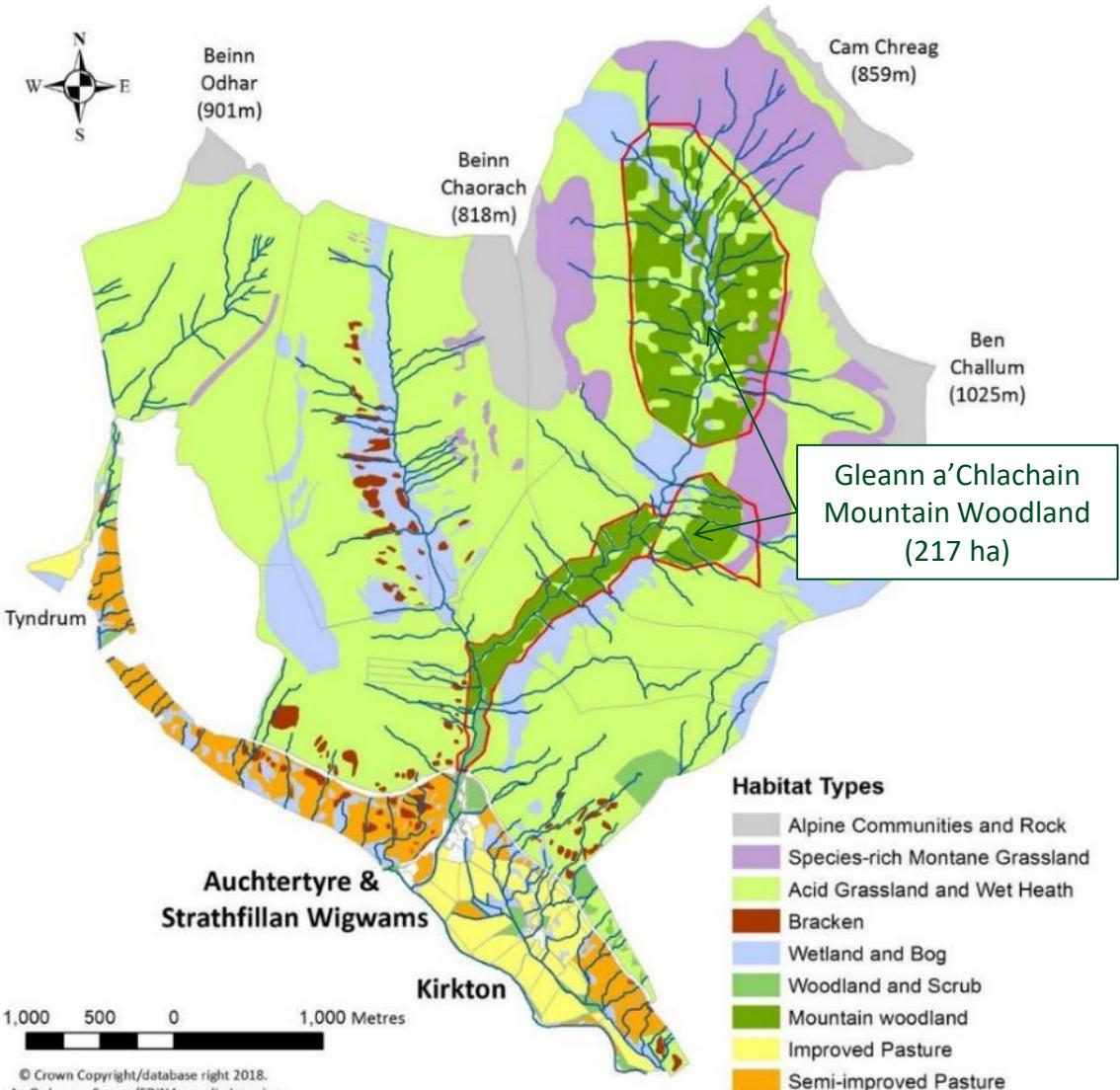
# Improving biodiversity on a hill farm: Mountain Woodland & Scrub



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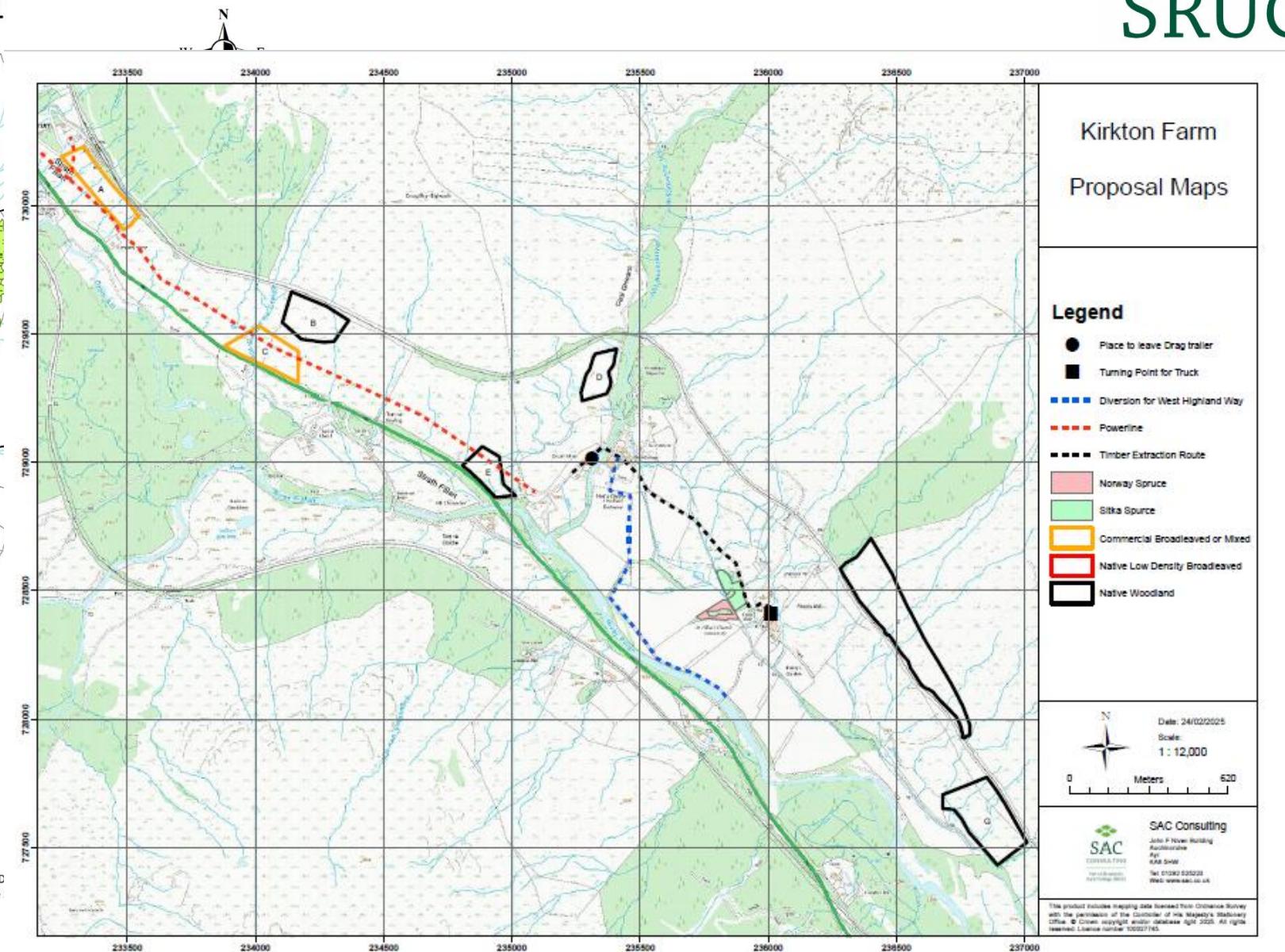
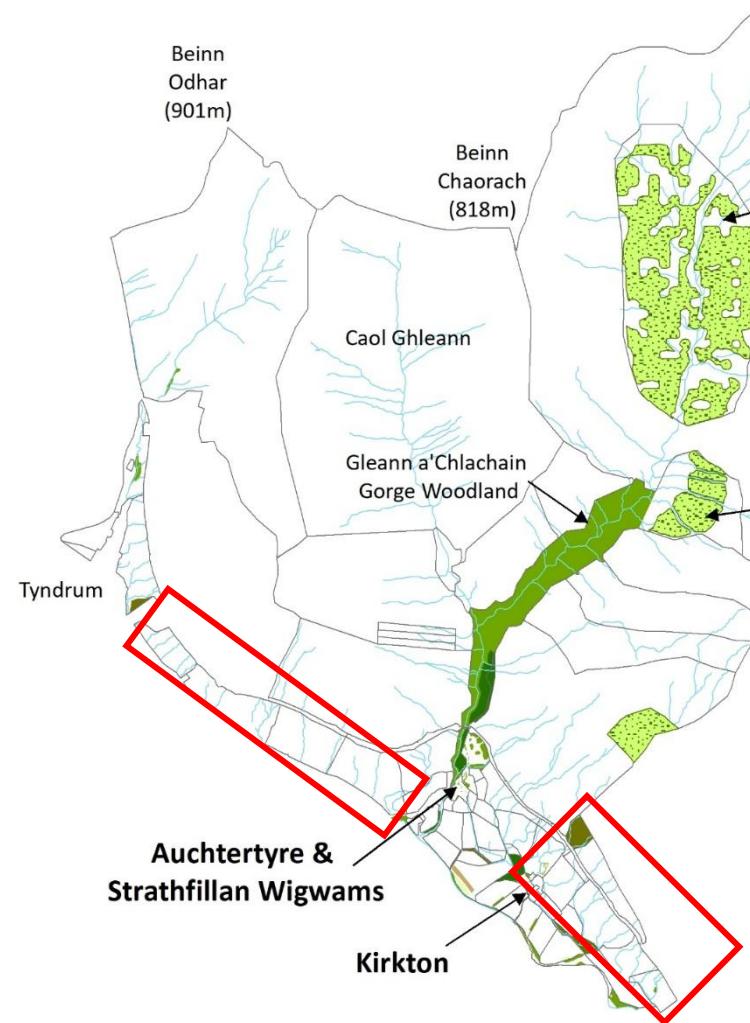


# What next?:

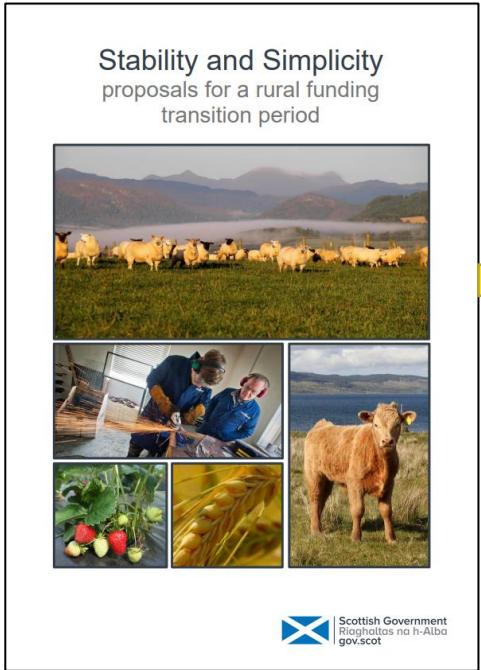


SRUC

## Woodland at SRUC Kirkton & Auchertyre Farms - 2021

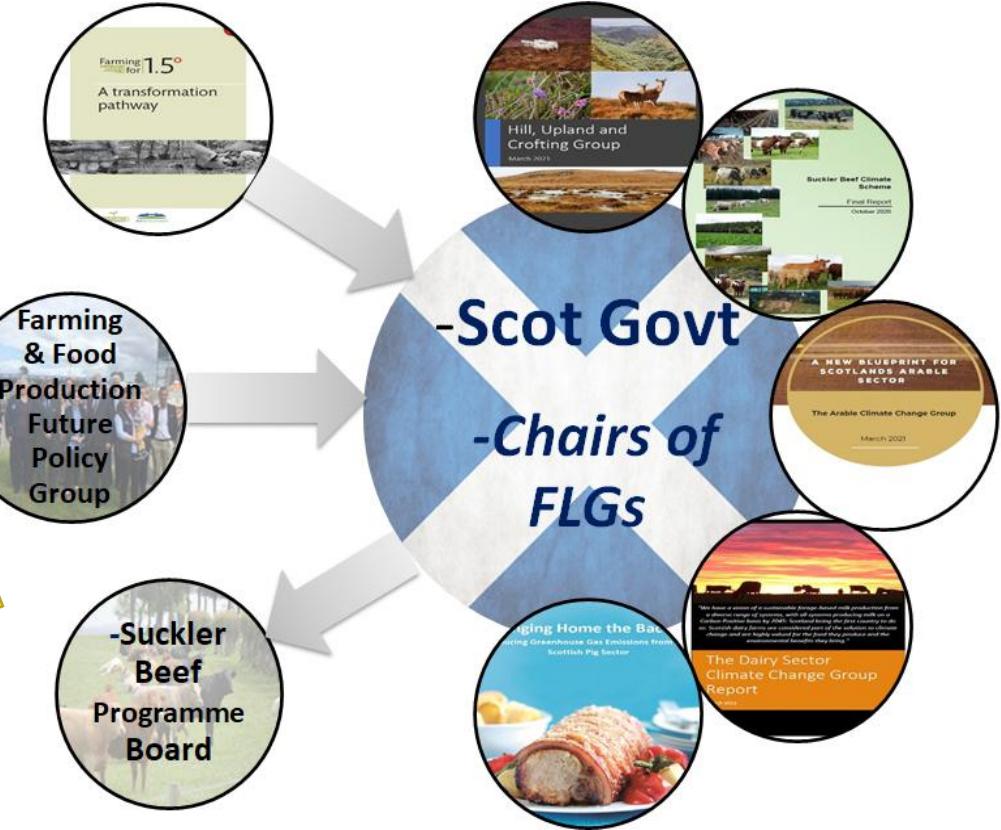
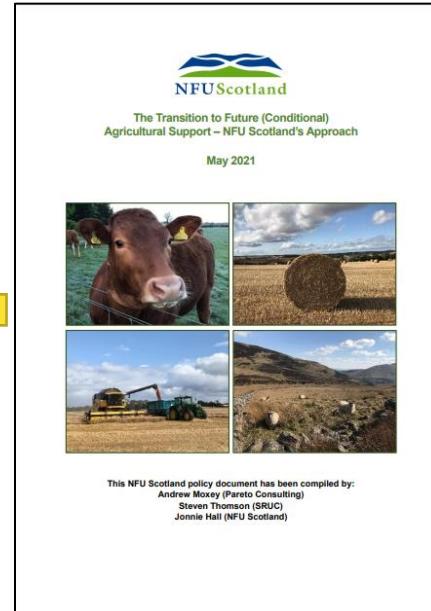


# Some final thoughts



Climate & biodiversity emergencies  
+  
Brexit

Agriculture Reform Implementation Oversight Board



Working with industry

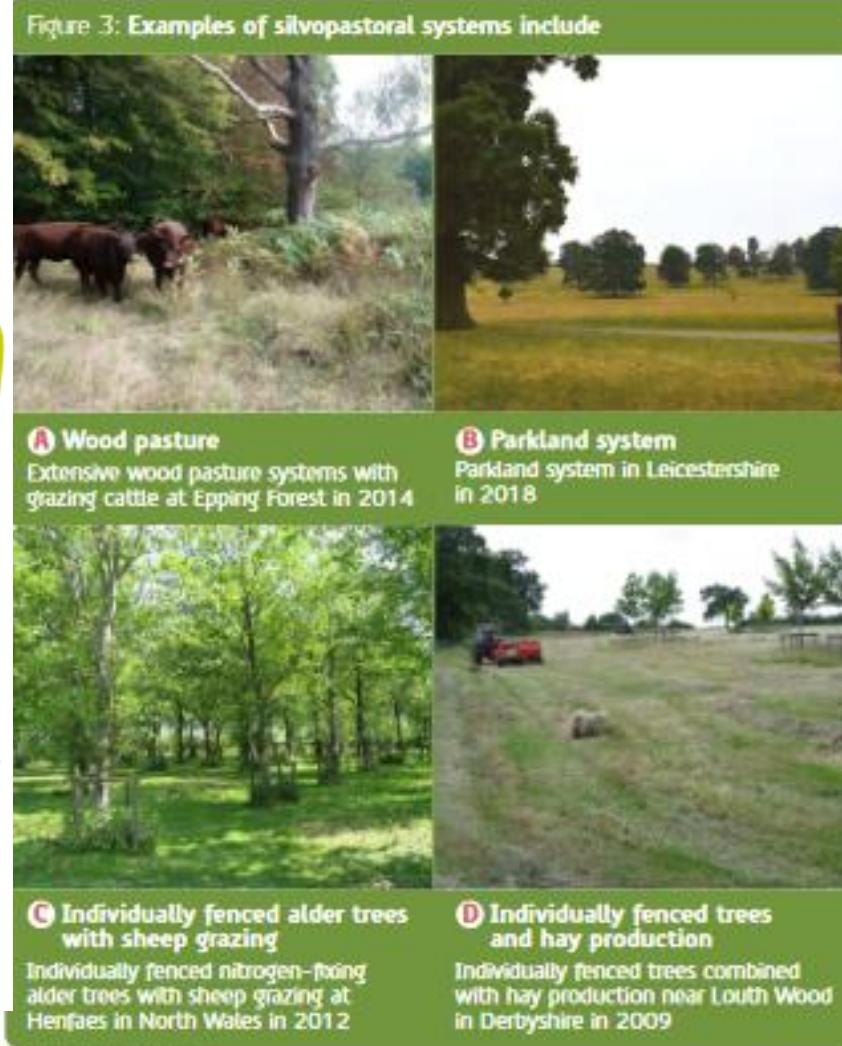
# Some final thoughts



## THE AGROFORESTRY HANDBOOK

Agroforestry for the UK

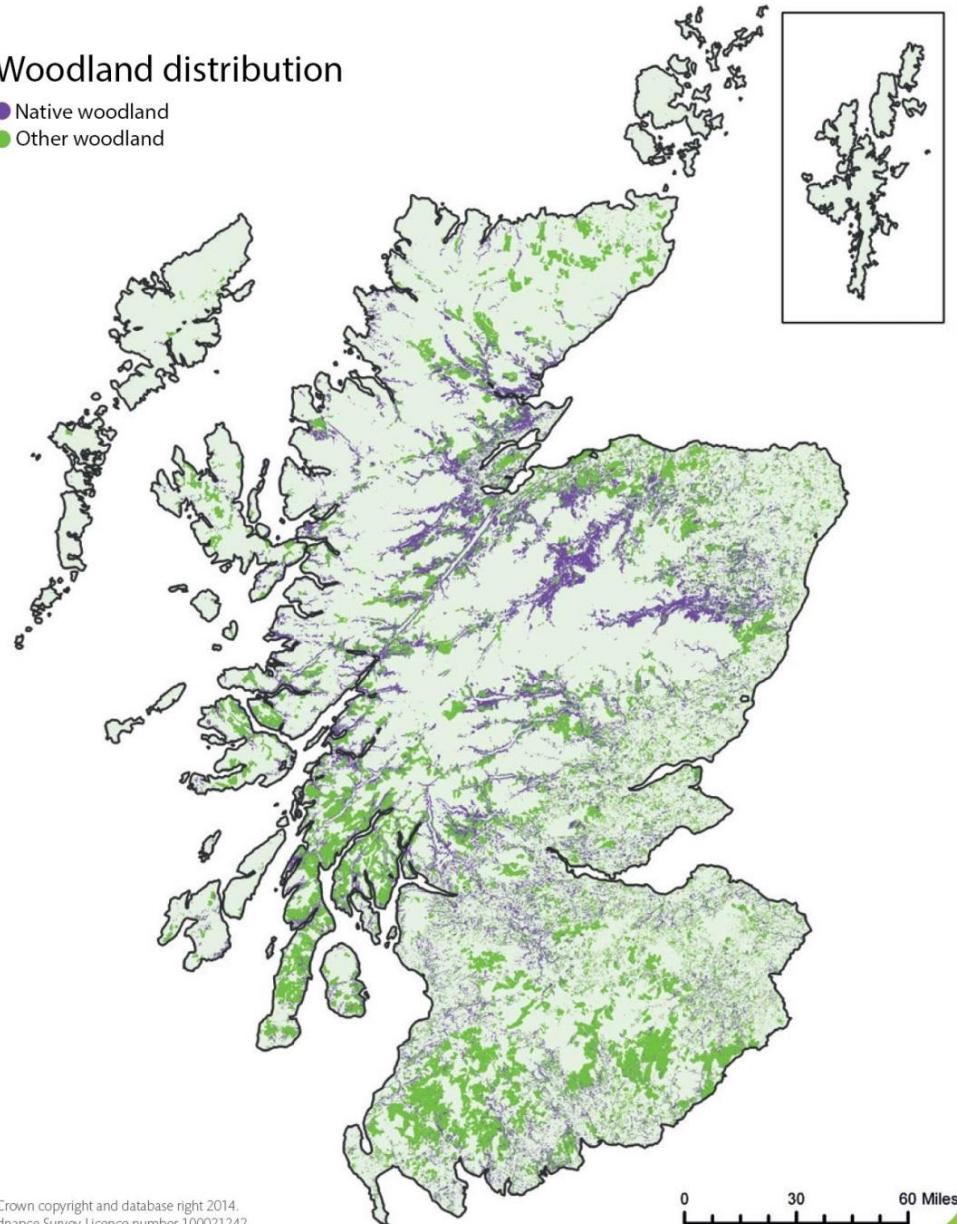
<https://www.soilassociation.org/media/19141/the-agroforestry-handbook.pdf>



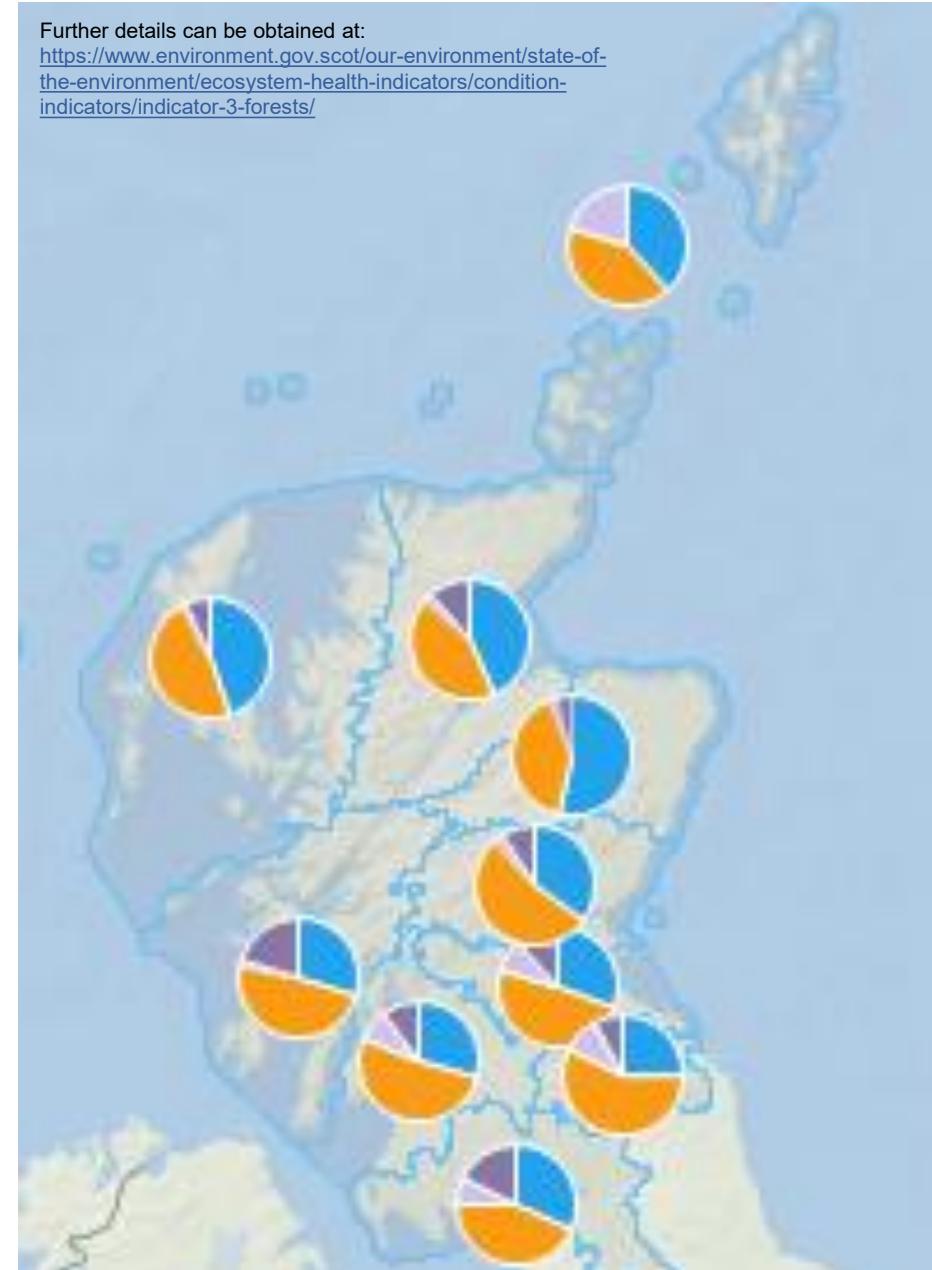
# Some final thoughts

Woodland distribution

- Native woodland
- Other woodland

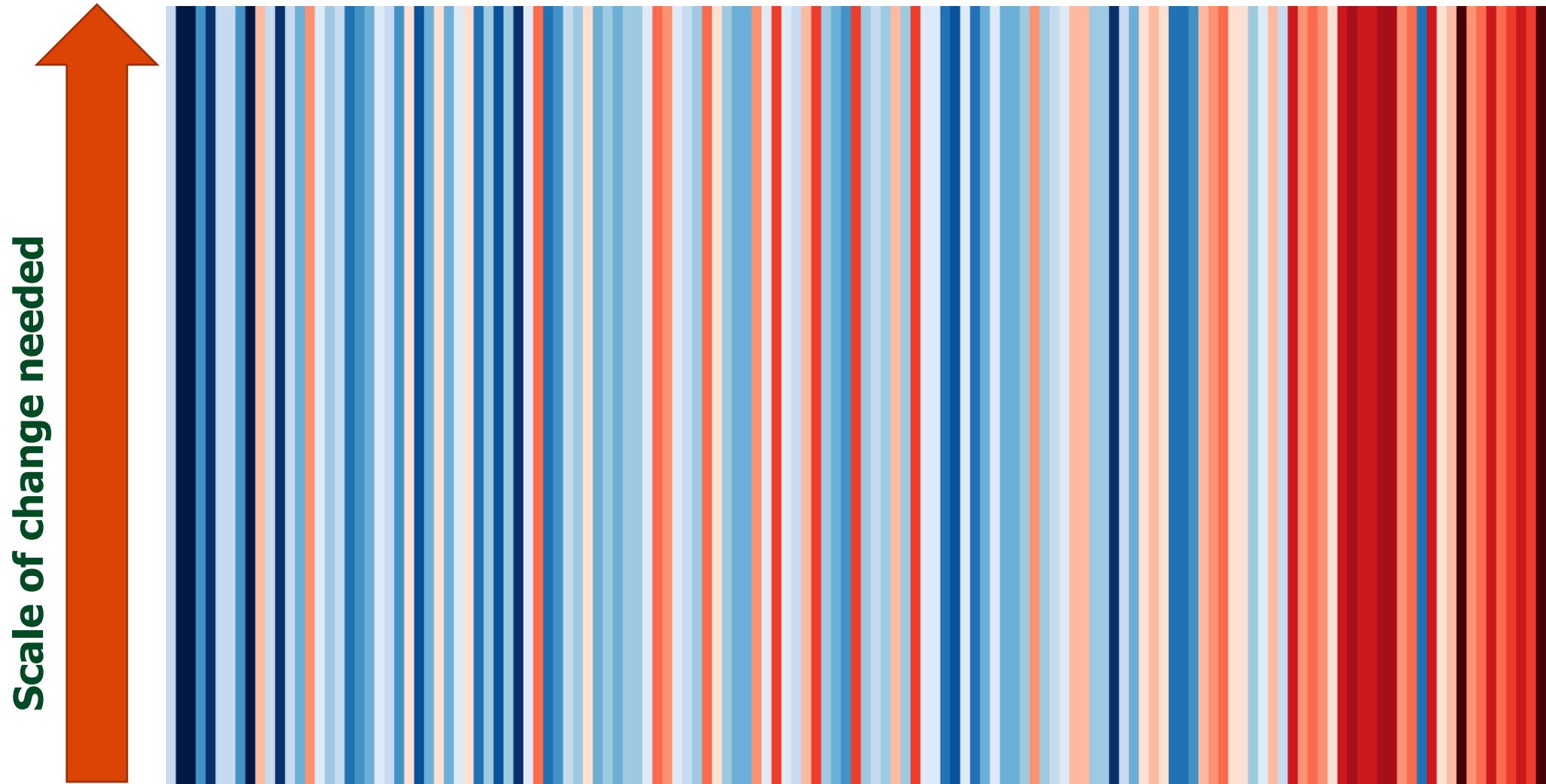


Further details can be obtained at:  
<https://www.environment.gov.scot/our-environment/state-of-the-environment/ecosystem-health-indicators/condition-indicators/indicator-3-forests/>



Woodland  
distribution and  
native condition  
(NWS 2014)

# Making your farm more resilient



# Making your farm more resilient

Scale of change needed



# More detailed background information available at:

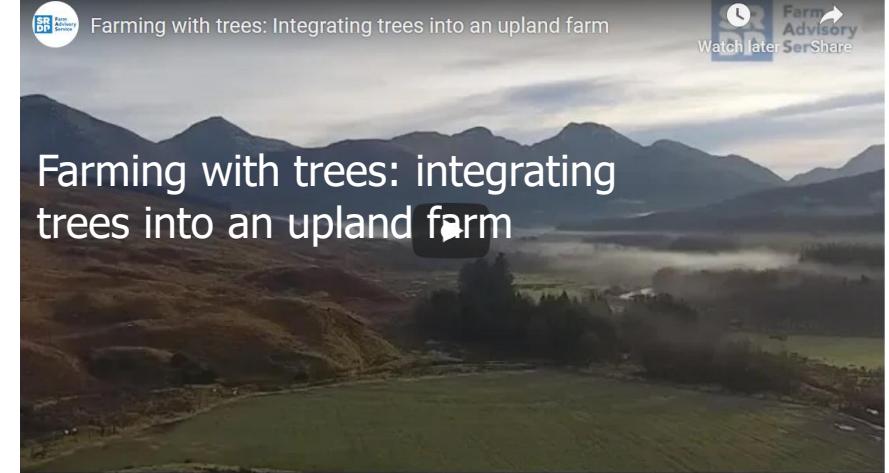


Agri-Environment management at Kirkton & Auchtertyre farms



Podcast: <https://www.fas.scot/publication/the-benefits-of-agri-environment-management-at-kirkton-auchtertyre-farms/>

Podcast: <https://audiboom.com/posts/7598101-climate-change-in-agriculture-rewilding>



<https://youtu.be/S65y-u8tpQM>

<https://youtu.be/5LZV5OuUIzU>

<https://youtu.be/eelppIVvQ3c>

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