

Getting the best from our land

Consultation on a draft

**Land Use Strategy for Scotland
2016 -2021**

November 2015

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Ministerial Foreword



Scotland's land is the subject of an energising and exciting debate as never before. Milestone legislation, such as the recently passed Community Empowerment Act and the Land Reform Bill which is currently being considered in the Scottish Parliament are shining a light on land use.

Land has never been a more precious resource and, with that in mind, I am very pleased to publish for consultation our second Land Use Strategy and to invite responses to the draft document.

Scotland's first Land Use Strategy was published in 2011 and, at that time, represented a new and unique approach to this important policy area. Since then we have completed the significant commitments in the first Strategy, we have initiated and completed two very successful land use pilot projects in Aberdeenshire and the Scottish Borders and we have begun to see considerable interest in our work from those outside Scotland. In the wider context we have seen the development of the natural capital agenda and the formation of the Scottish Forum for Natural Capital, the increased use of an ecosystems approach and significant developments in areas such as the use of spatial mapping tools. This significant body of work has been undertaken in partnership with a wide range of organisations, groups and individuals across Scotland who recognise the importance of this work and are keen to be involved. Without them we could not have achieved such substantial progress during the life of the first Land Use Strategy.

It is now time to take stock and to consider where our focus should be for the next 5 years. I believe that the Vision, Objectives and Principles set out in our first Strategy remain every bit as relevant and valid. Land use is an issue which requires long term stability and we propose that this strong central framework remains unchanged in order to provide that stability. Around that strong policy direction this draft Land Use Strategy sets out our priorities for the next five year period.

At present we are in a period of financial constraint and while this may limit our capacity to deliver in the short term, it does not limit the level of our ambition in the longer term. Scotland's land resources are of vital importance to our economy, our environment and our people. We all stand to benefit if they are well managed and used wisely.

I hope that you will recognise and share our ambition in this draft Strategy and I encourage you to be part of the debate and to participate in this consultation. I look forward to hearing your views.

Dr Aileen McLeod
Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform

1. Introduction

The publication of Scotland's first [Land Use Strategy](#) was a step change in the Scottish Government's approach to land use. With the publication of the Strategy in 2011, Scotland led the UK in the consideration of land as a fundamental resource for the nation. The first Strategy provided a policy agenda for all land in Scotland and set out a direction of travel towards a more integrated and strategic approach to land use. It recognised the benefits we all derive from land, including underpinning our economic prosperity, and the need to ensure a sustainable future for our land.

Recognising land as a fundamental resource which is vital for a successful economy, for the environment and for communities is as clear today as it was 5 years ago when the first Strategy was issued. The increasing complexity of land related matters in Scotland is recognised and this review of the Land Use Strategy deals with the key issues which we believe will impact upon Scotland during the next five years. We have learned much from delivery of the first Strategy and there has been extensive research work undertaken by the Scottish Government and through our [strategic research programme](#). We have initiated two regional land use pilot projects and have been assisted by a wide range of work from our key delivery partners.

1.1 Scotland's First Land Use Strategy

The [Climate Change \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#) requires the Land Use Strategy to be reviewed every five years and a revised document to be laid before the Scottish Parliament. This review has been informed by a range of stakeholder workshops, by policy considerations and reflects the changing landscape of ideas since 2011. Further information about the review process and related documents can be found on the [Land Use Strategy](#) webpages.

The first Land Use Strategy provides a strong foundation upon which to move forward with delivery. We deliberately took a cautious approach in the first Strategy because we felt there was much that we didn't know or fully understand. Despite that caution we have achieved much, as our annual [Progress Statements](#) show. However, climate change remains a pressing matter, as do a number of other issues, such as the decline in some of our biodiversity. We are keen to build on the success of the two [land use pilot projects](#) and to complement the work underway in the land reform agenda and through the [Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#).

Land use is driven by a wide range of considerations and change tends to happen slowly and for the longer term. The drivers of change include the priorities of those who manage the land, market influences, the incentives and regulations which impact upon particular areas and the capacity of the local area. However what is always required is a consistent approach to policy and to decision making.

This need for consistency is reflected in our approach to the second Land Use Strategy which maintains the direction of travel and the Vision, Objectives and Principles from the first Strategy.

1.2 The Next Five Years

Our second Land Use Strategy builds on the strong framework set out in 2011. We are clear that our goal of long term, well integrated sustainable land use delivering multiple benefits for all in society remains valid and achievable.

The central framework of the Strategy therefore remains the same – the Vision, Objectives and Principles for Sustainable Land Use. These have extensive support amongst stakeholders and are widely accepted as fit for purpose in terms of providing the strategic direction for sustainable land use matters. They represent a long term view to guide policy and decision making, and ensure consistency and stability of purpose for our land resources in Scotland. For that reason this document does not reiterate what has already been said in the first Land Use Strategy. The policy direction remains constant and with the central components in place our second Land Use Strategy focuses on the priority activities for the next five year period and represents a programme of action. A suite of policies and proposals has been developed around the following three themes:

Policy Context – policies and proposals which provide further clarity on current Scottish Government policy and reinforce and ensure consistent messages.

Informed Decision Making – policies and proposals which underpin decision making with improved data, increased accessibility and wider empowerment of communities and stakeholders in decision making.

Applying the Principles – policies and proposals which apply the Land Use Strategy Principles on the ground, either as specific projects or in ways which influence direct change on the ground.

The central framework of Vision, Objectives and Principles and the policies and proposals which follow support the Scottish Government's central purpose as set out in [Scotland's Economic Strategy](#) published in March 2015 to create a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth. The Land Use Strategy also supports the three underpinning principles in [A Stronger Scotland, The Government's Programme for Scotland 2015-16](#) published in September 2015:

- The need to deliver greater prosperity for our country;
- Ensuring that there is fairness in how our nation's wealth, resources and opportunities are distributed;
- Making sure that we encourage and facilitate participation by everyone in the debates and decisions that matter to them most, regardless of their circumstances or backgrounds.

2. The Land Use Framework

2.1 Our Vision for Land Use

Our long term Vision for sustainable land use remains valid and is a key component of the Land Use Strategy. Our Vision is to 2050.

Our Vision

A Scotland where we fully recognise, understand and value the importance of our land resources, and where our plans and decisions about land use will deliver improved and enduring benefits, enhancing the wellbeing of our nation.

2.2 Our Land Use Objectives

The Objectives in the first Land Use Strategy are robust and fit for purpose and remain a strong framework for policy.

Our Objectives

Land based businesses working with nature to contribute more to Scotland's prosperity

Responsible stewardship of Scotland's natural resources delivering more benefits to Scotland's people

Urban and rural communities better connected to the land, with more people enjoying the land and positively influencing land use

The policy context and evidence base has developed over the past 5 years, in part due to the influence of the first Land Use Strategy, and this section highlights how those Objectives and Principles are still applicable.

2.3 Land Use and Business

Land-based businesses working with nature to contribute more to Scotland's prosperity.

Scotland's land-based businesses, including small producers such as crofters, are the cornerstone of our rural economy. They support our thriving food and drink industry, provide the timber for our expanding forestry sector, contribute to the tourism industry and support the continued vitality of our rural communities by

providing employment and supporting local services. They also play an essential role in maintaining and delivering many of the vital ecosystem services upon which we all depend such as clean air and water, flood protection or a rich and varied biodiversity. Often the impact of decisions taken about land use or land management will be experienced many miles away in urban areas, for example flood attenuation by tree planting to slow the flow of flood water, or peatland restoration in the uplands which benefits us all by locking up carbon and contributing to climate change mitigation.

We recognise that our land-based businesses have to operate in a commercial world and that margins are tight. We understand that some sectors, such as agriculture, face considerable challenges in the years ahead. That is why we are keen to have a conversation now about how we collectively tackle those challenges. [The Future of Scottish Agriculture – A Discussion Document](#) was published in June 2015 and is part of a dialogue about the future of the agriculture industry in Scotland. Elsewhere in this Strategy we acknowledge forestry's role as a key multipurpose land use and the need to review the [Scottish Forestry Strategy](#). We also believe there is the potential for a new strategic vision for the uplands. These are all key components of our strategic consideration of land use and each will align with the wider Vision and Objectives set out in the Land Use Strategy.

Many of our land based business are intimately tied into the system of incentives set by the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Now that the reform process is complete and we have a new system in operation it is essential that we continue to ensure that we are getting the best deal for our land managers and for the wider environment. We also need to look ahead to the next CAP and make sure that Scotland and our land based businesses are in the best possible place to benefit in the future.

The first Strategy highlighted delivering multiple benefits as the necessary shift in approach to help us move towards achieving this Objective. Our objective to maximise the opportunities for land to deliver multiple economic, environmental and social benefits is still valid and at the heart of this revised Strategy.

2.4 Land Use and the Environment

Responsible stewardship of Scotland's natural resources delivering more benefits to Scotland's people.

Scotland has a world renowned environment. It helps us to produce and to market our food and drink, drives a large proportion of our tourism industry and supports employment for thousands of people in our agricultural and forestry sectors. What is less well recognised is the value of the ecosystem services which are provided by the wider environment and upon which we all rely. These ecosystem services include goods which we need and use such as timber or energy, services we rely on such as water purification or climate regulation and less tangible benefits such as space for recreation or relaxation. It is essential that we better understand and properly recognise the value of the environment in the decisions we take and the way we manage our land resources. To support this, the review of the Scottish

Forestry Strategy (Policy 4) will emphasise the continued protection of Scotland's forest resource.

The stocks of ecosystem services we have in Scotland can be thought of as natural assets or natural capital. Like all assets we need to manage them sensibly and sustainably so that they will continue to provide the essential services we need now and for future generations. Since the publication of the first Strategy we have promoted the wider use of an ecosystems approach. We believe this approach has potential to improve decision making by recognising and working to sustain the benefits that nature provides. In 2011 we published an information note on [Applying an Ecosystems Approach to Land Use](#). This note summarised the three key steps which are important when using an ecosystems approach, these are:

- Considering natural systems
- Taking account of the services that ecosystems provide
- Involving people

Maximising the benefits provided by nature often requires co-ordinated action at a landscape scale. This is a scale at which natural systems tend to work best and where there is often most opportunity to make changes which can have real and lasting benefits. To promote this approach, the 2014-20 SRDP includes a new Environmental Co-operation Action Fund, which supports the costs of facilitating cooperation among groups of land managers in order to deliver landscape-scale environmental projects.

Since the publication of the first Strategy we have also initiated two pilot projects in the Scottish Borders and Aberdeenshire. These projects have worked with local stakeholders to develop land use frameworks which can be used to inform local decision making. The new Strategy builds on the work undertaken by the pilot projects in terms of the partnership approach, the need to provide access to data and information and explores the ways in which the final frameworks can contribute to improved land use decision making.

The first Strategy highlighted partnerships with nature as the necessary shift in approach to help us move towards achieving this Objective. It is still the case that we need to work towards more holistic decision-making which takes increased account of how nature works and of how our decisions impact on nature. A greater use of an ecosystems approach is one way to achieve this.

2.5 Land Use and Communities

Urban and rural communities better connected to the land, with more people enjoying the land and positively influencing land use.

We are all part of a community. A community can be based on its location (for example people who live, work or use an area) or common interest (for example the business community, sports or heritage groups). Both need to be at the heart of decisions about land use because land is at the core of our communities. It provides

places for us to live, work and enjoy recreation. It also provides many of the ecosystem services we rely on for life itself.

When people can influence what happens in their community and contribute to delivering change, there can be many benefits. Pride in the local community can increase, people may be more inclined to go outdoors and be active, or have the opportunity to grow their own fruit and vegetables and eat more healthily. All of these things improve people's physical health, mental wellbeing and overall quality of life.

It has also been shown that most people feel that they should be involved in local land use decisions beyond the rights already provided by the statutory planning system; this is why we need to encourage better connections between communities and the land. An example of how we have helped create this stronger connection between local communities and land is through Forestry Commission Scotland's National Forest Land Scheme. Since its launch in 2005, nineteen local communities have taken on the ownership and management of over 3,000 hectares of forestry to deliver their local development aspirations e.g. local employment, community-based fire wood businesses etc.

These findings are reflected in the [Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#). It gives communities the mechanisms to achieve their own goals and aspirations, including provisions to allow communities to purchase abandoned or neglected land in both urban and rural areas. The Land Reform (Scotland) Bill, which is currently before the Scottish Parliament, also impacts on land use. For example, it includes a proposal for a statutory land rights and responsibilities statement which will set out the Scottish Government's objectives for future land reform in Scotland and provide a reference point for future land reform policy. The Bill will also include a requirement that the Scottish Government will issue guidance in relation to engaging communities in decisions relating to land. These major initiatives by the Scottish Government demonstrate how seriously we take the relationship between communities and land. Through these two pieces of legislation we are working to articulate what the relationship between communities and land should look like in a modern, responsible nation.

Community ownership is at the heart of the Scottish government's community empowerment agenda. The acquisition and management of land can make a major contribution towards creating stronger, more resilient and more independent communities. Not only can community ownership help to protect or enhance local facilities, it is also seen as a means to generate income for community activity, increase community confidence and cohesion, enable communities to have more control over their futures, and support economic regeneration and sustainable development of the community. The Scottish Government has an important role in supporting communities who have the ambition to take on ownership of land, and to demonstrate this commitment has set a target of achieving 1 million acres of land in community ownership by 2020.

This Land Use Strategy builds on the above legislation and targets by recognising the need for people to be better connected with their land and outlines steps to help make that happen.

The first Strategy highlighted linking people with the land as the necessary shift in approach to help us move towards achieving this Objective. We have made significant progress in the past five years with the legislation mentioned above, in terms of empowering local communities and in relation to the place making agenda which is central to planning policy. But much still remains to be done in terms of realising the community benefits that flow from land and building stronger connections between people and land.

2.6 Principles for Sustainable Land Use

The Principles for Sustainable Land Use are a strong and useful component of policy and should continue to inform land use choices across Scotland. [National Planning Framework 3](#) (NPF3) and [Scottish Planning Policy](#) (SPP) recognise their value when making decisions about the use and management of Scotland's land and the SPP includes advice to planning authorities about using the Principles.

We expect that the Principles for Sustainable Land Use will be used by public bodies when making plans and taking significant decisions affecting the use of land and strongly encourage individuals, businesses and organisations that have significant land management responsibilities to have regard to them. These Principles are:

- a) Opportunities for land use to deliver multiple benefits should be encouraged.
- b) Regulation should continue to protect essential public interests whilst placing as light a burden on businesses as is consistent with achieving its purpose. Incentives should be efficient and cost-effective.
- c) Where land is highly suitable for a primary use (for example food production, flood management, water catchment management and carbon storage) this value should be recognised in decision-making.
- d) Land use decisions should be informed by an understanding of the functioning of the ecosystems which they affect in order to maintain the benefits of the ecosystem services which they provide.
- e) Landscape change should be managed positively and sympathetically, considering the implications of change at a scale appropriate to the landscape in question, given that all Scotland's landscapes are important to our sense of identity and to our individual and social wellbeing.
- f) Land-use decisions should be informed by an understanding of the opportunities and threats brought about by the changing climate. Greenhouse gas emissions associated with land use should be reduced and land should continue to contribute to delivering climate change adaptation and mitigation objectives.
- g) Where land has ceased to fulfil a useful function because it is derelict or vacant, this represents a significant loss of economic potential and amenity for the community concerned. It should be a priority to examine options for restoring all such land to economically, socially or environmentally productive uses.
- h) Outdoor recreation opportunities and public access to land should be encouraged, along with the provision of accessible green space close to where people live, given their importance for health and well-being.
- i) People should have opportunities to contribute to debates and decisions about land use and management decisions which affect their lives and their future.
- j) Opportunities to broaden our understanding of the links between land use and daily living should be encouraged.

3. Policies and Proposals

This section sets out the new policies and proposals that will be taken forward under the second Land Use Strategy. In line with the definitions given in [Low Carbon Scotland](#), the Report on Policies and Proposals 2, a ‘policy’ is a course of action which has already been wholly or largely decided upon. A ‘proposal’ is a suggested course of action, the details of which might change as this course of action is explored further.

3.1 Policy Context

The Land Use Strategy provides us with the opportunity to ensure the most appropriate use and management of the country’s land resources, and to emphasise key policy areas where we plan to work on enhanced alignment. The Land Use Strategy is relevant across a wide spectrum of Government policy and by its very nature land and land use has an impact on many aspects of life in Scotland. However this is not a comprehensive look across all aspects of related policy. This was undertaken in the first Strategy and remains valid. In this section we highlight only those areas where there is a need for further action in the next 5 year period.

Natural Resource Management

Policy 1: We are committed to better understanding and managing Scotland’s natural resources to enable their fair, wise and productive use, and to conserve stocks of ecosystem services for future generations. We will do this by promoting an ecosystem approach to managing our natural capital.

Our understanding and thinking about natural resource management and ecosystem services has progressed since the publication of the first Land Use Strategy. The appropriate use and management of Scotland’s natural resources is at the heart of a sustainable economy and underpins economic growth. This is founded on the recognition that our economy, health and well-being are tied to a secure and resilient natural environment.

There have been considerable developments in the field of natural capital since the publication of the first Land Use Strategy with the publication of the first [Natural Capital Asset Index](#) by Scottish Natural Heritage, the first World Forum on Natural Capital and the formation of the Scottish Forum on Natural Capital. We acknowledge the importance of taking our natural resources into account in the way that we make decisions and do business. This does not mean that we must attach a monetary value to the environment, but it does mean that we must be fully aware of the impact of our actions on the environment, both now and in the future.

The use of an ecosystems approach is a helpful means to better understand our environment and factor it into decisions. The work of the land use pilot projects in Aberdeenshire and the Scottish Borders have successfully demonstrated the use of an ecosystems approach and have contributed enormously to what this approach means in practice.

Policy Alignment

Policy 2: The Land Use Strategy sits alongside and has informed the National Planning Framework 3, Scottish Planning Policy and the National Marine Plan to support Scotland's Economic Strategy 2015. Relevant sectoral strategies (e.g. forestry and agriculture) will take account of the Land Use Strategy Objectives and Principles in their design and delivery.

The Land Use Strategy has a vital role to play in delivering the [A Stronger Scotland](#), [The Government's Programme for Scotland 2015-16](#) and [Scotland's Economic Strategy](#). However, feedback from stakeholders has indicated that the relationship between the Strategy and other Government policies is not always clear. This policy statement and the diagram below clarify that relationship and illustrate this with a selection of key Government policy and strategy documents. It is important to recognise that policy alignment may be horizontal as well as vertical and this is shown in the diagram.

Land Use Strategy Policy Context

SG Purpose	To focus government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth								
SG National Outcomes	<p>The LUS contributes primarily to the following national outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe. • We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production. • We live in well-designed sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need. • We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations. • We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others. 								
SG National Plans, Policies and Strategies	Scotland's Economic Strategy 2015								
	*Land Policy Statement	Scotland Rural Development Programme	Climate Ready Scotland Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme	Low Carbon Scotland: Meeting our Emissions Reduction Targets 2013-2027. The Second Report on Proposals and Policies	Land Use Strategy	Scotland's third National Planning Framework & Scottish Planning Policy	Achieving a Sustainable Future: Regeneration Strategy	Scotland's National Marine Plan	Our Place in Time - The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland
Sectoral Plans, Policies and Strategies	A Vision for Scottish Agriculture	River Basin Management Plans	*Strategic Vision for the Uplands	Recipe for Success: Scotland's National Food & Drink Policy - Becoming a Good Food Nation		2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity	National Peatland Plan	Scottish Forestry Strategy	*Pollinators Strategy
LUS Vision	A Scotland where we fully recognise, understand and value the importance of our land resources, and where our plans and decision about land use deliver improved and enduring benefits, enhancing the wellbeing of our nation								
LUS Objectives	Land based businesses working with nature to contribute more to Scotland's prosperity			Responsible stewardship of Scotland's natural resources delivering more benefits to Scotland's people			Urban and rural communities better connected to the land, with more people enjoying the land and positively influencing land use		
LUS Principles for Sustainable Land Use	10 Principles that reflect government policies on the priorities which should inform land use choices across Scotland								

*Policies shaded in light blue are either proposed or under development

Statutory Spatial Planning System

Policy 3: We will undertake a programme of information and awareness-raising. This will provide:

- more detail and clarity on the relevance of the Land Use Strategy to the planning system;
- information about the added value the Land Use Strategy can bring, particularly to development planning;
- information on the use of an ecosystems approach in Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), which in turn supports development planning.

National Planning Framework 3 refers directly to the Land Use Strategy and the Principles. It highlights the importance of delivering multiple benefits from land and the need to recognise that the environment is a functioning ecosystem and to take this into account in decision making. It also highlights the work of the two land use pilot projects.

Scottish Planning Policy sets out national planning policies which reflect Scottish Ministers' priorities for the operation of the planning system and for the development and use of land. In doing so it promotes consistency in the application of policy across Scotland. Scottish Planning Policy is clear that application of planning policies should have regard to the Principles of the Land Use Strategy.

The planning system and local planning authorities are already delivering against the Objectives of the Strategy and the application of the Principles is a matter of good planning. Planning demonstrates good practice in community engagement both in the preparation of development plans and in consultation on decision making. In addition, development plans contain detailed policy on areas such as flood risk, the protection of landscape and biodiversity, green networks, and renewable energy development which, through decision making on planning applications, help to deliver the LUS and the Principles for Sustainable Land Use. Although the Scottish Government is clear that the planning system is a delivery mechanism for the Land Use Strategy the alignment between the Land Use Strategy and planning is not always well understood.

We are therefore aware that we could do more to highlight the potential for the added value that the Strategy, and in particular an ecosystems approach, can bring in terms of delivering multiple benefits. We propose to undertake a programme of information and awareness-raising to ensure that the added value that the Strategy can bring is fully recognised.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a statutory requirement for all development plans. Since the publication of the first Strategy considerable work has been undertaken on the use of an ecosystems approach in SEA and there is much good practice and advice to share. We are already committed to the publication of an information note on the use of an ecosystems approach in SEA and once this is

available we will undertake information and awareness raising with SEA and planning professionals on this particular aspect.

An independent review of the Scottish planning system is currently underway and is due to report to Scottish Ministers in Spring 2016. We will consider the implications of the recommendations for the Land Use Strategy when they emerge.

Forestry

Policy 4: We will undertake a review of the Scottish Forestry Strategy.

Forestry has a key role to play in terms of delivering the Vision, Objectives and Principles of the Land Use Strategy in rural and urban Scotland. The sustainable management of Scotland's woodlands and forests makes an important contribution to Scotland's economy; it delivers health and well-being benefits for people and a range of other critical ecosystem services including climate change mitigation and adaptation. Woodland and forests also have a role to play in reducing the risk from climate change for the people and biodiversity of Scotland.

To increase its role in addressing the challenge Scotland faces from climate change, a target of 100,000 ha of new woodland creation by 2022 has been established. Within the UK, Scotland is leading the way in terms of areas of new woodland creation, however it is recognised that more needs to be done to achieve the planting target. Forestry Commission Scotland is working closely with stakeholders, following the introduction of a new streamlined Forestry Grants Scheme, to help increase the number of good quality woodland creation proposals.

The Scottish Forestry Strategy was published in 2006 and is due for review. It is important that policy is kept up to date to reflect changing circumstances and to ensure proper read across between different policy strands.

Forestry Commission Scotland will co-ordinate this review and seek stakeholder views on key issues. The review of the Forestry Strategy will take account of the other policies and proposals outlined in this Strategy

Land Reform

Proposal 1: We will further consider the relationship between current land related policies and the potential advantages of a single policy statement about land which deals with ownership, use and management.

To date the links between land ownership, use and management have been recognised but the relationships have not always been captured within relevant policy statements. We have already consulted on a draft Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement, which proposes a vision and set of principles to guide the development of public policy on the nature and character of land rights in Scotland, and have included a commitment to a statutory Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement (LRRS) within the current Land Reform (Scotland) Bill.

Stakeholders have provided their views on the proposed LRRS as part of the recent evidence sessions on the Land Reform (Scotland) Bill to the Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment Committee, and many have sought to highlight the links between consideration of land rights and land use. A number of stakeholders have suggested that there are general principles that underpin both consideration of land rights, in the Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement, and land use, in the Land Use Strategy, as well as other policies that relate to land.

Scottish Ministers feel there continues to be a strong need to consider land use through the Land Use Strategy, and to consider land rights through the proposed Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement. However, Scottish Ministers would also like to explore further the potential advantages of an overarching policy statement that deals with ownership, use and management of land. Any such statement would not remove or override the Land Use Strategy, which is a statutory requirement.

3.2 Informed Decision Making

From the outset the Land Use Strategy has sought to improve our decision making capability so that we can make better informed decisions which help us move towards our policy objective of more integrated land use delivering multiple benefits for Scotland. We need to make the most effective use of the data and tools at our disposal and we also need to actively work to bring together all those with an interest in land in their locality. This effective use of data is underpinned by the wider data agenda. Scottish Government have published a [Data Vision](#) for Scotland which sets out ambitions for a Scotland, which by 2020, recognises the value of data and makes responsible use of that data. The [Open Data Strategy](#) is a key component of this overarching data vision.

The capability exists in Scotland to make more effective use of our data and to use it to make better informed decisions. The following set of policies and proposals seeks to assist in underpinning decision making by improving the availability of information, improving how data is used and making it more accessible and useful. They also seek to ensure this information can help empower communities and stakeholders in terms of land use decision making.

Ecosystem Services Mapping and Tools

Policy 5: We will continue to encourage those holding public data to make it open and available for others to use and will facilitate access to that data via the Land Use Data Directory.

We will explore the development of models and Geographic Information System (GIS) tools to enable assessments of land use/management change.

The regional pilot projects in Aberdeenshire and the Scottish Borders have demonstrated the value of ecosystem services data, and the power of utilising that data in GIS mapping tools to inform decision making.

The [Land Use Data Directory](#) launched in June 2015 is a first step towards facilitating access to the wide range of data currently available about ecosystem services in Scotland. The [Open Data Strategy](#), which was published in February 2015, commits to establishing a Scottish Data Discovery Site. This will provide data users with a common entry point to all of Scotland's Open Data and will link to existing websites and data stores. The LUS Data Directory will contribute to this facility. [Scotland's Environment Web](#) (SE Web) also has a key role to play in visualising much of this data and enabling users to view what is available. We will continue to develop and support the Data Directory, linking in to any future open data discovery sites. We will continue to encourage those with spatial data sets to ensure that they are available in accessible formats and to follow the open data standards set out in the [Open Data Resource Pack](#).

The availability of data needs to be accompanied by improved tools for its use and we recognise the exploratory work that has been undertaken by a range of groups to develop and use GIS tools.

We recognise that for many this type of work is new and challenging and can also be resource intensive. However, such work is important in order to enable better informed decision making and enable all those with an interest in land use to access and utilise data. The Scottish Government will take a lead by exploring the practicality of developing methods and methodologies to assist in the assessment of land use benefits and opportunities at a more local level. We will also explore the development of an online national mapping tool which will reduce the burden locally, set out a national data baseline and encourage consistency across Scotland. In developing an online mapping tool we will build on the knowledge and experience gained by projects in Scotland, such as the land use pilot projects, in trialling this type of approach.

We will also explore the feasibility of developing, as part of the online mapping tool, functionality to allow users to incorporate locally relevant data to build a more comprehensive picture for their locality.

Regional Land Use Partnerships

Policy 6: We will encourage the establishment of regional land use partnerships.

In order to progress better integration of land uses and better understanding of the issues there is clear value in bringing together local people, land users and managers into regional or local partnerships. The evidence from the land use pilots is that bringing people together enables better understanding and that there is a willingness and appetite to work together in this way. However it is also clear that such groups need a clear remit to encourage participation.

An ecosystems approach emphasises the need to involve people in decision making. Land use partnerships are a means to enable local people to have a much clearer influence over land use in their area. They are a way to include the views of a wide range of stakeholders and community interests.

While the role and remit of such partnerships is likely to be largely dependent on the issues and challenges they face locally, the area where they can have a significant role and impact is in leading or being closely involved in work to develop regional land use frameworks (see Proposal 2 below). The use of a regional land use partnership to take forward this work gives a clear remit and also provides a mechanism to begin to discuss and address issues around future land uses for an area within the context of better understanding the interactions, the opportunities and the aspirations of local communities.

Regional land use partnerships could be local authority led, but other formats will be considered and alignments based on existing geographical partnerships may be more appropriate in some areas.

Regional Land Use Frameworks

Proposal 2: We will further explore the development of regional land use frameworks for rural areas of Scotland.

The Land Use Strategy pilot projects have demonstrated the potential benefits from developing regional land use frameworks. The independent evaluation and the feedback from the pilots themselves show that such frameworks have the potential to:

- Assist in the assessment of how changes in land use and land management may impact on a broad range of ecosystem services;
- Bring stakeholders together and build understanding about competing interests;
- Involve local communities in decisions about their local area;
- Provide context and wider input to a range of local authority responsibilities such as development planning and flood risk planning; and,
- Assist in targeting the use of finite financial resources to where they may have most impact.

However we accept that this is a new and developing area of work and that further work is required before we could consider rolling out this approach more widely. Accordingly, we will explore the potential for further development, for example by working with willing regional land use partnerships (see Policy 6), by considering the development of tools and guidance and by facilitating easier access to data and GIS tools (see Policy 5). We will also consider what potential there is for streamlining the current range of sectoral plans and strategies which could be incorporated into a single land use framework for a locality, for example forestry, biodiversity or flood risk strategies. The relationship between these frameworks and statutory development plans will also need to be considered further.

Land Use Mediation and Facilitation

Proposal 3: We will explore options for facilitation and/or mediation between land owners/managers and communities.

Mediation and facilitation have distinct but complementary roles to play in generating better understanding and more effective decision making in relation to land use. In both cases dialogue is one of the key aspects to progress. It is anticipated that regional land use partnerships will be effective at building and maintaining dialogue between different interests. However it is recognised that at times dialogue breaks down or it is difficult to initiate discussions between interested groups. In such cases a third party or intermediary can assist in providing facilitation or in playing a mediating role between parties.

Both the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and the Land Reform (Scotland) Bill (currently being considered by the Scottish Parliament) emphasise the importance the Scottish Government places on engaging and empowering communities. The Community Empowerment Act specifically contains powers for Ministers to take such steps as they consider appropriate for the purpose of arranging, or facilitating the arrangement of, mediation in relation to registration of an interest in land or the exercise of the right to buy land within the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. The Land Reform Bill contains proposals to ensure that land use decisions do not act as a barrier to the sustainable development of communities. We anticipate that in the majority of cases disputes will be resolved without having to resort to statutory means, however assistance in the form of facilitation or mediation may be required.

The Rural Parliament has highlighted the need for a facilitation service between land owners and communities in certain situations. Similar issues have been raised by stakeholders who feel that facilitation would help to encourage earlier/better dialogue between communities and landowners/agents to understand each other's needs more clearly and identify where there are mutually beneficial outcomes. Mediation would help to address barriers where relationships have deteriorated in negotiations. Much can be learned from other sectors in this respect and the work undertaken by planning to utilise charrettes as an approach to community involvement is a good example of where we can learn from good practice elsewhere.

3.3 Applying the Principles

The following policies and proposals are about actions which directly apply the Land Use Strategy Principles and Objectives or which will have a direct influence on the ground in future years. They represent the focus of activity and resources during the next 5 year period; however, they do not represent all on-going activity.

Agriculture

Policy 7: We will develop and implement a package of measures to facilitate the step change to climate friendly farming and crofting. This will promote carbon efficient agriculture, environmental benefits and increasingly integrated land use.

Our food exports have an enviable reputation for quality which stems in part from the quality of the environment in which they are produced. Scotland's food and drink sector relies heavily on our wonderful environment to market its produce world-wide. We have a responsibility not only to care for our own environment but to be mindful of the impact of our production methods on other parts of the globe, notably through greenhouse gas emissions and other factors which influence climate change.

[Becoming a Good Food Nation](#) highlights the importance of environmentally sound production of food and the need to consider that impact both locally and around the world.

Agriculture is now responsible for almost a quarter of Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions, producing 12.5 MtCO₂e in 2013 – almost as much as transport and energy production. This is due to the gases produced in agriculture – nitrous oxide, caused by cultivation and fertiliser use, has almost 300 times more impact on global warming than carbon dioxide. Methane which is produced by livestock has 25 times carbon dioxide's effect. The emissions from agriculture are more than Scotland's entire total statutory permitted greenhouse gas emissions for 2050 from all sources, so reductions must be made.

[The Future of Scottish Agriculture – A Discussion Document](#) sets out our aspirations to be world leading in green farming. This vision includes a number of future aims: farmers working with nature and embracing their role as custodians of the natural environment; a low carbon agriculture industry; halting the loss of farmland biodiversity and achieving good water quality in water bodies affected by diffuse pollution; farmers and the climate benefiting from the efficient use of energy feed and fertilizer; and farmers combining food production with other land uses, including farm woodlands, renewables, flood management, etc. to make the best use of their land. We are also keen to ensure that smaller producers, such as crofters, are fully involved in this discussion as they have an important contribution to make.

As part of the on-going national discussion on the future of Scottish agriculture, farmers and land managers are being asked to get involved and provide their thoughts to the Scottish Government on these outcomes. This will assist in identifying the short and long term actions required to help realise the vision for Scottish agriculture.

A suite of measures is currently under development which will assist land managers to move towards more climate friendly farming. Scotland's farm businesses have already made significant progress in this direction, but more can, and needs, to be achieved if we are to realise our vision of climate friendly farming.

The focus is on practical action which can be taken at a holding level to benefit both the climate and the farm business. Practical measures and approaches are being developed for the Third Report on Policies and Proposals (RPP3), to be published in 2016, and there will be an on-going roll out of actions in following years. These could include work on further integration of different land uses such as appropriate tree planting on farms. We will work with our industry partners to ensure wide dissemination of information and knowledge so as to increase take up and participation.

Agri-Environment

Policy 8: We will continue to develop a targeted approach in the current Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) Agri-Environment Climate Scheme and will utilise more localised map based ecosystems assessments to inform funding decisions as appropriate and as these become available across Scotland.

The new SRDP has established the principle of targeting to enable measures and support to be focused where they are likely to be most effective and make most efficient use of resources. As pressure on resources increases it is imperative that we continue to refine and develop our targeting to ensure that we generate the best economic and environmental returns for Scotland and link this to achieving our biodiversity targets and improved ecosystem health and restoration.

The targeting of SRDP agri-environment options is supported by a range of spatial information. As the land use pilots have shown there is scope to significantly increase the use of GIS data to assist with a targeted approach and to place that targeted approach within a wider ecosystem or landscape context. Work is currently underway to assess how the framework approach developed by the pilots can be developed within the context of the SRDP.

As more detailed and refined mapping of ecosystem services data becomes available, through the development of ecosystem services mapping and tools (Policy 5), this will be used to inform decisions for the current SRDP measures. Regional land use frameworks (Proposal 2) and partnerships (Policy 6) each have a role in terms of bringing stakeholders together to discuss and consider the outputs and their use more widely to promote a more integrated approach to land use and the achievement of multiple benefits. In time, the development of regional land use frameworks will contribute significantly to enabling decisions to be made within a wider ecosystems context.

Agri-Environment

Proposal 4: We will explore the further development of a targeted approach to agri-environment in the next SRDP (post 2020) and how this could make increased use of an assessment of ecosystem health and a spatial approach.

Our experience is that the lead-in times for the SRDP are considerable, and early strategic consideration of the approach to the next SRDP (post 2020) would be highly beneficial. Now that the new SRDP and the agri-environment scheme are operational we have an opportunity to consider what the next scheme could deliver for Scotland and whether there is a case to reshape it.

The increased emphasis on targeting, as set out above, the acceptance of ecosystem health as a means to support the targeting work, and the use of a more spatial approach could enable the next SRDP to be more focused so that limited financial resources can be targeted much more precisely. This would support the work of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy by enabling ecosystem enhancement and restoration where it is most needed.

In addition to the work of the land use pilots, there is a range of other work underway or completed which could add to our consideration of the approaches we might take to the next SRDP. These include work to increase the effectiveness of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, forestry assessment procedures, regulatory work on Nitrate Vulnerable Zones, a range of public agency work and ongoing work on cross compliance and greening.

In order to ensure that agri-environment measures under the next SRDP are locally focused and driven by ecosystem health measures and local targeting, we will explore commissioning a feasibility study to consider how such a package could be shaped and delivered. This will assist in achieving a programme of measures to deliver better environmental outcomes and maximise the return on investment of public money.

Urban Land Use

Proposal 5: We will explore the feasibility of establishing an urban land use pilot project.

The Land Use Strategy applies across the whole of Scotland and is equally applicable in urban and rural areas. To date, the work of our two pilot projects in Aberdeenshire and the Scottish Borders has focused on land use and the application of an ecosystems approach in a primarily rural context. However, the principles of an ecosystems approach and the Land Use Strategy Principles for Sustainable Land Use apply equally well in urban areas and have much to offer the decision making process within our towns and cities.

Our statutory spatial planning system similarly applies equally across urban and rural Scotland, although the highest intensity of development activity often tends to be in and around urban areas. To complement Policy 3 and to further illustrate the benefits that an ecosystems approach can bring to planning decisions through the SEA process, we will explore setting up an urban land use pilot. Such a project will also enable us to gain a better understanding of the role that the Land Use Strategy could play in an urban setting, its relationship with planning and how, as part of the supporting SEA, an ecosystems approach can be used to best effect in an urban setting.

We will explore the feasibility of establishing an urban based land use pilot project, similar to the two pilot projects which completed in March 2015.

Upland Land Use

Proposal 6: We will scope the potential to develop a strategic vision for the uplands, exploring the multiple benefits they deliver and how they can contribute to climate change targets.

The potential of upland Scotland to contribute to the climate change agenda is significant and has been recognised through the [Peatland Plan](#) which promotes good management of peatlands and supports restoration where required. Upland areas have considerable potential to deliver multiple benefits from land use and to make a more wide ranging contribution to the climate change agenda. However, they are also areas of challenge, in terms of the economic viability of land based businesses and individual producers such as crofters, and the potential tensions between competing land uses. The debate should include the opportunities for land use change that can enhance the ecosystem services delivered from these areas in addition to improvements to the economic viability of land holdings through diversification and integrated land use e.g. appropriate woodland establishment.

We consider that the Land Use Strategy presents an opportunity to bring together the full range of issues which are apparent in upland Scotland and to consider these in a strategic way so that we can agree a new vision for our uplands, consider how they can contribute to the climate change agenda and how we can better manage these areas in a more integrated and sustainable way for the future.

We recognise that this is a challenging task given the complexity and wide range of interests represented. Indeed even the term 'uplands' is contested, so we recognise the need to tread carefully to ensure the support of all with an interest in these areas. For this reason we propose to scope the potential to develop a strategic vision. Only after we have taken this initial step will we determine whether it is feasible to proceed with the development of a shared vision for the uplands.

4. Monitoring Delivery of the Strategy

4.1 The Land Use Strategy Indicators

The ten Land Use Strategy indicators were chosen to monitor the progress being made in the delivery of the first Strategy's three Objectives. Although they do not provide a comprehensive measure of every aspect of land use associated with the Strategy, they represent key aspects of the Strategy and provide a balanced picture of important representative elements. We consider that these indicators remain fit for purpose. Further information on trends illustrated by the indicators can be found on the Land Use Strategy [webpages](#). The table below shows how the indicators relate to the three long term Objectives.

	indicator	objective
1	LULUCF Land use, land use change and forestry GHG emissions	all
2	Gross Value Added GVA in agriculture and forestry	1
3	Scottish tourism visits	1 and 3
4	High nature value farming and forestry	1 and 2
5	Natural capital asset index NCAI	2
6	Water ecological status	2
7	Terrestrial breeding birds	2
8	Volunteering in nature	2 and 3
9	Visits to the outdoors	3
10	Community inclusion in land use decision making	3

4.2 Future Reporting

We welcome an ongoing dialogue with all our stakeholders about the delivery of the Policies and Proposals in this document. We aim to provide regular updates on progress and will explore the best means to provide people with information on progress with the delivery of the Strategy, as well as information on events and resources. The Strategy webpages currently provide a range of information including publications and reports and the Land Use Data Directory. These pages will be regularly reviewed to ensure that they provide useful information.

5. Responding to this Consultation

We would like to hear your views on the draft Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021 and the proposals and policies we have set out. A series of questions is included below to guide your response. Each question relates to a section of the draft Land Use Strategy or the Environmental Report.

A business and regulatory impact assessment is not required, as the Land Use Strategy will not directly impose new regulatory burdens on businesses, charities or the voluntary sector. Any new measures which arise in relation to the Strategy will be subject to assessment as appropriate.

An initial assessment of equality issues has been made for this Draft Strategy. In addition, this consultation contains a question on equalities issues which may lead to further consideration being necessary. Any new measures which arise in relation to the Strategy will be subject to assessment as appropriate.

In accordance with the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Scottish Government has prepared an Environmental Report which should be read alongside this consultation document. An Environmental Report Non-Technical Summary is part of this report.

A scenarios assessment exercise helped inform the first Land Use Strategy and its Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), and this is available alongside earlier SEA work at: www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/Countryside/Landusestrategy/sea.

We welcome your thoughts on the potential impacts, both positive and potentially negative, of any of the ideas in this paper and questions have been included at the end of the consultation paper for this purpose.

[Annex A](#) contains details of the statutory requirements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. A range of other information can be found on the [Land Use Strategy](#) webpages.

The consultation runs until 29 January 2016. A 10 week consultation will allow us to ensure your views are taken into account in the Land Use Strategy 2016 - 2021.

There are a number of ways that you can respond:-

- online on the Scottish Government website at <https://consult.scotland.gov.uk/>.
- by email by sending your response to the Land Use and Biodiversity Team at LandUseStrategy@gov.scot
- in writing, by sending your responses to the address below.

Land Use and Biodiversity Team,
The Scottish Government,
1C-North Victoria Quay,
Edinburgh,
EH6 6QQ

When responding, please complete a Respondent Information Form to let us know your confidentiality preferences. All respondents should be aware that the Scottish Government is subject to the provisions of the [Freedom of Information \(Scotland\) Act 2002](#) and would therefore have to consider any request made to it under the Act for information relating to responses made to this consultation exercise.

We would be grateful if you would use the consultation questionnaire provided or indicate in your response which questions or parts of the consultation paper you are responding to, as this will aid our analysis of the responses received.

Other formats of this consultation can be made available on request, please contact the Land Use and Biodiversity Team on LandUseStrategy@gov.scot or 0131 244 7968.

5.1 Consultation Questions

Vision, Objectives and Principles

The Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021 continues the policy direction established in the first Strategy. We consider that the Vision, three long term Objectives and Principles for Sustainable Land Use are still relevant and fit for purpose therefore we propose that they are retained.

Q 1a Do you think that the Vision, Principles for Sustainable Land Use and three long term Objectives are still fit for purpose?

Q 1b Please provide your reasons for your answer.

Policy Context

This group of policies and proposals is intended to raise awareness and provide clarity in relation to the status and context of the Land Use Strategy and a range of current Scottish Government policies. It covers natural resource management, statutory planning, forestry and the relationship between land ownership, use and management.

Natural Resource Management

Our understanding and thinking about natural resource management and ecosystem services has progressed since the publication of the first Land Use Strategy. We consider that the use of an ecosystems approach is a helpful means to better understand our environment and factor it into decisions. This has been successfully demonstrated in the work of the land use pilot projects in Aberdeenshire and the Scottish Borders.

Policy 1: We are committed to better understanding and managing Scotland's natural resources to enable their fair, wise and productive use, and to conserve stocks of ecosystem services for future generations. We will do this by promoting an ecosystem approach to managing our natural capital.

Q 2a Do you agree that continued use of an ecosystems approach is an effective way to manage Scotland's natural capital?

Q 2b Please provide reasons for your answer.

Policy Alignment

We set out the relationship of the LUS2 to key Scottish Government policies including the National Planning Framework 3 and the National Marine Plan as well as a range of sectoral policies such as forestry, agriculture, peatland, and soils.

Policy 2: The Land Use Strategy sits alongside and has informed the National Planning Framework 3, Scottish Planning Policy and the National Marine Plan to support the Scotland's Economic Strategy 2015. Relevant sectoral strategies (e.g. forestry and agriculture) will take account of the Land Use Strategy Objectives and Principles in their design and delivery.

Q 3a Is the relationship as set out in the draft Land Use Strategy 2016 - 2021 clear?'

Q 3b Do you have any comments on the relationship between the LUS and Scotland's Economic Strategy 2015, National Planning Framework, National Marine Plan and other relevant policies?

Planning

Planning policy refers to the Land Use Strategy and highlights it as a key document for planning authorities when considering the wider context for development plans. We wish to raise awareness of the relevance of the LUS2 to planners and to enhance their understanding of how the LUS Principles and ecosystems approach to environmental assessment can add value to the planning process.

Policy 3: We will undertake a programme of information and awareness-raising. This will provide:

- more detail and clarity on the relevance of the Land Use Strategy to the planning system;
- information about the added value the Land Use Strategy can bring, particularly to development planning;
- information on the use of an ecosystems approach in Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), which in turn supports development planning.

Q 4a Do you think that the activities described above could be useful?

Q 4b Do you have any suggestions on other kinds of information and activities that could be useful?

Forestry

Forestry is a key land use, covering around 18% of Scotland. It is also a key contributor to climate change and biodiversity targets. The existing Scottish Forestry Strategy was published in 2006 prior to the publication of the first Land Use Strategy. Given the age of the existing Scottish Forestry Strategy, a review could ensure better alignment between forestry policies and the Land Use Strategy Principles.

Policy 4: We will undertake a review of the Scottish Forestry Strategy.

Q 5 How could the content of the current Scottish Forestry Strategy be updated to better reflect the Objectives and Principles of the Land Use Strategy and other key priorities?

Land Reform

In light of evidence provided to the Parliament in connection with the Land Reform (Scotland) Bill, we intend to explore further the potential advantages of an overarching policy statement that deals with ownership, use and management of land.

Proposal 1: We will further consider the relationship between current land related policies and the potential advantages of a single policy statement about land which deals with ownership, use and management.

Q 6a Do you consider that there could be advantages in having a single policy statement about land which deals with ownership, use and management?

Q 6b Do you have any comments on the relationship between current land related policies and how these would relate to a single policy statement?

Informed Decision-making

This group of policies and proposals supports decision making with the development of improved data, increased accessibility and wider empowerment of communities and stakeholders in decision-making.

Ecosystem Services Mapping and Tools

We will continue to develop and support the LUS Data Directory, linking in to any future open data discovery sites and we also propose to explore the practicality of developing methods and methodologies to assist in the assessment of land use benefits and opportunities at a more local level.

Policy 5 – We will continue to encourage those holding public data to make it open and available for others to use and will facilitate access to that data via the Land Use Data Directory.

We will explore the development of models and Geographic Information System (GIS) tools to enable assessments of land use/management change.

Q 7a Do you agree that models and GIS tools could help inform decision making about land use/management change?

Q 7b Please provide your reasons for your answer.

Q 7c Do you think that a baseline ecosystems services mapping tool could be useful?

Q 7d Do you have any comments on a mapping tool?

Regional Land Use Partnerships

Local partnerships can be an effective way of bringing people together to consider land use issues that are relevant to them. We wish to encourage the setting up of regional land use partnerships to help deliver the Land Use Strategy at a local level.

Policy 6 – We will encourage the establishment of regional land use partnerships.

Q 8a Do you agree that regional land use partnerships could be a helpful way to support regional delivery of the Land Use Strategy?

Q 8b Who do you think could be best placed to lead these initiatives?

Q 8c Can you suggest any alternative means of supporting the delivery of the Land Use Strategy at regional level?

Q 8d Do you have any other comments on this policy?

Regional Land Use Frameworks

The regional land use pilots in Aberdeenshire and the Scottish Borders have demonstrated the potential benefits of the development of regional land use frameworks which could be used to inform land use/management decisions and to inform development plans. Regional frameworks may also be useful for local authorities as they undertake a range of statutory functions or duties such as managing flood risk or biodiversity.

Proposal 2 – We will further explore the development of regional land use frameworks for rural areas of Scotland.

Q 9a Do you think that regional land use frameworks could be useful to inform regional/local land use decision-making?

Q 9b Which aspects of this approach do you think require further development?

Q 9c Do you have any comments on this proposal?

Land Use Mediation and Facilitation

Mediation and facilitation have distinct but complementary roles to play in generating better understanding and more effective decision making in relation to land use. We consider that both mediation and/or facilitation could have a role to play in land use to assist communities and landowners to resolve differences.

Proposal 3 – We will explore options for facilitation and/or mediation between land owners/managers and communities.

Q 10a Do you think that land use mediation or facilitation could be useful in a land use context?

Q 10b Please provide your reasons for your answer.

Applying the Principles

This group of policies and proposals support the application of the LUS Principles for Sustainable Land Use either as specific projects or used to influence changes on the ground. It includes agriculture and climate change measures, agri-environment targeting, possible approaches to the next CAP programme, urban Scotland and the uplands.

Agriculture

The Future of Scottish Agriculture sets out our aspirations to be world leading in green farming. A suite of measures is under development which will assist land managers to move towards more climate friendly farming. Practical measures and approaches are being developed for the Third Report on Policies and Proposals (RPP3), to be published in 2016, and there will be an on-going roll out of actions in following years.

Policy 7: We will develop and implement a package of measures to facilitate the step change to climate friendly farming and crofting. This will promote carbon efficient agriculture, environmental benefits and increasingly integrated land use.

Q 11 Do you have any suggestions on other potential measures to encourage climate friendly farming and crofting?

Agri-Environment

The new SRDP has established the principle of targeting to enable measures and support to be focused where they are likely to be most effective. The land use pilot projects have shown there is scope to significantly increase the use of GIS data to assist with a targeted approach. As more detailed and refined mapping of ecosystem services data becomes available, through the development of ecosystem services mapping and tools (Policy 5) this will be used to inform decisions for the current SRDP measures.

Policy 9 – We will continue to develop a targeted approach in the current Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) Agri-Environment Climate Scheme and will utilise more localised map based ecosystems assessments to inform funding decisions as appropriate and as these become available across Scotland.

Q 12a Do you agree that more localised map-based ecosystems assessments could be useful to assist in informing funding decisions?

Q 12b Please provide your reasons for your answer.

Agri-Environment

Now that the new SRDP and the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme are operational we have an opportunity to consider what the next scheme could deliver for Scotland and whether there is a case to reshape it. The increased emphasis on targeting, the acceptance of ecosystem health as a means to support the targeting work, and the use of a more spatial approach could enable the next SRDP to be more focused so that limited financial resources can be targeted much more precisely.

Proposal 4 – We will explore the further development of a targeted approach to agri-environment in the next SRDP (post 2020) and how this could make increased use of an assessment of ecosystem health and a spatial approach.

Q 13a Do you agree that an assessment of ecosystems health and a spatial approach could be helpful to further inform targeting for the next SRDP?

Q 13b Please provide your reasons for your answer.

Urban Land Use

In order to explore the applicability and effectiveness of an ecosystems approach in an urban context, and its complementarities with the statutory planning system we propose to explore the feasibility of establishing an urban land use pilot project.

Proposal 5 – We will explore the feasibility of establishing an urban land use pilot project.

Q 14a Do you agree that an urban pilot project could be useful?

Q 14b Please provide your reasons for your answer.

Upland Land Use

The uplands have considerable opportunities to contribute to the climate change agenda in Scotland by delivering multiple benefits from land use. However they are also areas of challenge and at times tension. The Land Use Strategy provides an opportunity to consider and agree a new strategic vision for our uplands.

Proposal 6 – We will scope the potential to develop a strategic vision for the uplands, exploring the multiple benefits they deliver and how they can contribute to climate change targets.

Q 15a Do you think that a strategic vision could be useful for the uplands?

Q 15b Do you have any comments on this proposal?

Monitoring Delivery of the Strategy - the Land Use Strategy Indicators

The ten Land Use Strategy indicators were chosen to monitor the delivery of the first Strategy's three Objectives. Although they do not provide a comprehensive measure of every aspect of land use, they represent key aspects of the Strategy and provide a balanced picture of important representative elements. We consider that these indicators remain fit for purpose and intend to add to or amend the indicators if appropriate indicators become available over time or if existing data collection ceases.

Q 16a Do you agree that the Land Use Strategy indicators are still fit for purpose?

Q 16b Do you have any comments on the future monitoring of the revised Land Use Strategy?

General Questions

Q 17 Are there any other activities that you think we should be undertaking to achieve better understanding and application of the Principles or delivery of the Strategy?

Q 18 Are there any other points you wish to make about any aspect of this draft Strategy?

Equalities

To help inform our Equality Impact Assessment of the revised Land Use Strategy it would be helpful if you could answer the following question:

Q 19 Do you have any comments on the policies and proposals in this draft Strategy in terms of how they may impact on any equalities group, i.e. with regard to age, gender, race, religion, disability or sexuality?

Questions on the Environmental Report

Q 20a: Do you consider that the Environmental Report set out an accurate description of the current environmental issues/baseline?

Q 20b: Please give reasons for your answer.

Q 21a: Do you consider that the predicted environmental effects as set out in the Environmental Report are accurate?

Q 21b: Please provide reasons for your answer including further information you feel should be considered in the assessment.

Q 22a: Do you consider that the recommendations and opportunities for mitigation and enhancement are accurate?

Q 22b: Please provide reasons for your answer.

Q 23: Are you aware of alternatives to the proposed policies that should be considered as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process conducted for the draft Strategy?

Annex A Statutory requirement under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009

Section 57 – Duty to produce a land use strategy

1. The Scottish Ministers must, no later than 31 March 2011, lay a land use strategy before the Scottish Parliament.
2. The strategy must, in particular, set out—
 - (a) the Scottish Ministers' objectives in relation to sustainable land use;
 - (b) their proposals and policies for meeting those objectives; and
 - (c) the timescales over which those proposals and policies are expected to take effect.
3. The objectives, proposals and policies referred to in subsection (2) must contribute to—
 - (a) achievement of the Scottish Ministers' duties under section 1, 2(1) or 3(1) (b);
 - (b) achievement of the Scottish Ministers' objectives in relation to adaptation to climate change, including those set out in any programme produced by virtue of section 53(2); and
 - (c) sustainable development.
4. Before laying the strategy before the Scottish Parliament, the Scottish Ministers must publish a draft strategy and consult with such bodies as they consider appropriate and also with the general public.
5. The strategy must be accompanied by a report setting out—
 - (a) the consultation process undertaken in order to comply with subsection (4); and
 - (b) the ways in which views expressed during that process have been taken account of in finalising the strategy (or stating that no account has been taken of such views).
6. The Scottish Ministers must, no later than—
 - (a) 5 years after laying a strategy before the Scottish Parliament under subsection (1); and
 - (b) the end of every subsequent period of 5 years,lay a revised strategy before the Scottish Parliament; and subsections (2) to (5) apply to a revised strategy as they apply to a strategy laid under subsection (1).



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