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| **News** |  |
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1 June 2021

**Appointment of Members of the Board of Nature**

Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero, Energy and Transport, Michael Matheson MSP, today announced the appointment of Dr Ian Gambles, Professor Peter Higgins, David Johnstone, Colin MacPhail, Professor Wayne Powell, Dr Heather Reid and Nikki Yoxall as Members of the Board of NatureScot.

**Appointments**

Dr Ian Gambles joins NatureScot from eight years at the Forestry Commission, where he has held the position of CEO. He is also a Non-Executive Director of the James Hutton Institute and now holds the Chair position. He was a founding Director of the Infrastructure Planning Commission in 2009 and worked for twelve years as a management consultant, both in the Big Four and running his own business. He is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants.

Professor Peter Higgins is Professor of Outdoor, Environmental and Sustainability Education at the University of Edinburgh, and Director of the United Nations University Recognised Centre for Education for Sustainable Development (Scotland). He Chaired the Scottish Government Ministerial Advisory/Implementation Groups on Learning for Sustainability, was a Member of 2008 National Parks Act Review Group and gave evidence in the development of the Land Reform Scotland (2003) Act. His early academic and professional career was in the environmental sciences, freshwater and fisheries biology, and included managing the re-introduction of salmon to the River Thames. Much of his current teaching and research is focused on our relationships with the natural world, and how education can help us towards a sustainable and more equitable future. He is a Principal Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Field Studies Council.

David Johnstone was until 2020 Chairman of Scottish Land & Estates. For the previous 25 years he has managed the family estate in the south-west of Scotland. The estate covers 15,000 acres which consists of forestry, farming and tenanted land. There are also residential properties, commercial properties, community villages, public footpaths, sporting activities, hydroelectric, wind farms, and a music festival. There is also 750 acres of native/ancient woodland.

Colin MacPhail currently operates his Agricultural Consultant business, CA MacPhail Consulting Ltd which is part of the 5Agri Group. He also farms a 6,000 acre hill farm with holiday accommodation on the Isle of Mull alongside his family. Mr MacPhail previously worked as an Agricultural Officer with the Scottish Government before moving into livestock procurement and then into Agricultural Consultancy with SAC Consulting (SRUC) on Benbecula and in Stirling. He then moved into farm business management on a large-scale diversified dairy, beef and sheep unit before starting his own consultancy business. He is passionate about rural communities and the role which farmers and land managers play in providing sustainable food production whilst continuing to deliver positive environmental management.

Professor Wayne Powell is currently Principal of Scotland’s Rural College (SRUC). Before joining SRUC, he was Chief Science Officer at Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centres. Prior to that, he was Professor and founding Director of the Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences at Aberystwyth University. Other current roles include membership of the Science Advisory Council of DEFRA, the Scottish Science Advisory Council and Convenor of the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee of Universities Scotland.

Dr Heather Reid is a science education consultant and former weather forecaster with the Met Office and BBC Scotland. She is currently a Member of the Board of Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority and sits on several STEM Education advisory committees and works closely with the education sector and industry. She was previously Chair of the Institute of Physics in Scotland, and a Trustee at Glasgow Science Centre.

Nikki Yoxall currently farms with her husband in the North of Scotland and holds roles with the Nature Friendly Farming Network, Pasture Fed Livestock Association and the Landworkers Alliance promoting and facilitating agroecoligical research and education. She has worked in the tertiary education sector both in Scotland, as Director of Learning and Teaching at Moray College, UHI and in England, as Head of Learning Landbased Studies at Chichester College. Mrs Yoxall is currently a Farmer Ambassador for the Soil Association.

The appointments are regulated by the Ethical Standards Commissioner.

**Length of Term, Remuneration and Time Commitment**

The appointments are for four years from 1 April 2021 until 31 March 2025. Members of the NatureScot Board receive £320.22 per day for a time commitment of 30 days per year.

**Other Ministerial Appointments**

Dr Reid is a Member of the Board of Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority. She receives £215.77 per day for a time commitment of three days per month.

Dr Gambles, Professor Higgins, Mr Johnstone, Mr MacPhail, Professor Powell and Ms Yoxall do not hold any other Ministerial appointments.

**Political Activity**

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a requirement for appointees’ political activity within the last five years (if there is any to be declared) to be made public.

Dr Gambles, Professor Higgins, Mr Johnstone, Mr MacPhail, Professor Powell, Dr Reid and Ms Yoxall have had no political activity within the last five years.

**NatureScot**

At a time of global climate crisis and biodiversity loss, the work of NatureScot is more vital than ever. In 2019, Scotland was the first nation to declare a climate emergency. Scotland should show similar leadership through a green recovery, putting nature-based solutions at the heart of our recovery. It’s not just about our natural world, it’s also about our people, communities and economy. NatureScot is committed to ensuring a prosperous and sustainable future for all and our Board has a significant role to play in making this happen.

Scotland’s nature and landscapes are a superb inheritance and internationally renowned. Through their life-giving processes they sustain all our lives and wellbeing: a healthy natural environment not only provides food and water, minerals and energy, flood protection and climate regulation, it also sustains our mental and physical wellbeing.

NatureScot believes that a nature-rich future, where everyone is involved, will make us all happier, healthier, wealthier and more equal. That means that as Scotland recovers from Covid-19, our natural world will be at the heart of the nation’s well-being.

NatureScot will focus on connecting people and nature to tackle the climate emergency and biodiversity loss through large and small scale nature based solutions. Working in partnership, these solutions must be bold, innovative, for everyone, built on sound science, entirely ethical and drivers of green economic growth.

NatureScot delivers its purpose by providing advice to Scottish Ministers and local authorities, promoting good practice, and by working in partnership with others in the public, private and voluntary sectors to help secure the enhancement of, and benefits from, our natural assets for society.