

Getting the best from our land

A Land Use Strategy for Scotland 2016 - 2021

Laid before the Scottish Parliament by the Scottish Ministers on 22 March 2016
in pursuance of Section 57 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009

SG/2016/6

March 2016



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Ministerial Foreword



In 2011 we published Scotland's first Land Use Strategy. We were optimistic about its potential impact and hopeful that stakeholders would begin to embrace the direction of travel. The past five years have exceeded our expectations in terms of just how much we have achieved and the strength of support for our policies. Not only have we delivered against the proposals set out in the first Land Use Strategy, we have initiated and

completed two highly successful land use pilot projects and our work has been showcased across the UK and in Europe.

The last five years have also seen the Scottish Parliament further develop the policy framework around land use. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and the Land Reform (Scotland) Bill build on the Objectives and Principles within the Land Use Strategy. Together they will put communities at the heart of decision making and result in real improvements in how land in Scotland is owned, used and managed.

It is now time to take account of these changes, consolidate our efforts and move forward into the next phase with this revised Land Use Strategy for the period 2016-2021. The recent consultation on the draft Strategy showed extensive support for the policies and proposals put forward and widespread enthusiasm for delivery. This strategy sets out our priorities for delivery including new and refreshed areas of policy such as the Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement, which will include consideration of land ownership, use and management, and a refresh of the Scottish Forestry Strategy. We highlight areas for detailed technical work such as the new regional land use partnerships and frameworks, and we recognise the need for change on the ground, particularly as climate change issues become more pressing and the need to adapt our land management practices becomes more urgent.

We have set out a bold and ambitious programme for the next five years and I look forward to working in partnership with stakeholders to deliver our ambitions.

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 its publication, 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, assisting with measures to both mitigate and adapt to climate change and the need to ensure a sustainable future for our land. Decisions about the way land is managed are important to balance pressures on ecosystem services due to climate change.

Since publication of the first Land Use Strategy in 2011, we have made considerable progress in delivering against the agenda. Information about progress against the activities in the Action Plan is recorded in the annual [Progress Statements](#). 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 five years ago when the first Strategy was issued. The increasing complexity of land related matters in Scotland is recognised and the second Land Use Strategy deals with the key issues which we believe will impact upon Scotland during the next five years from 2016 - 2021.

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. An extensive range of stakeholders also input to the work of the Land Use Strategy on a regular basis and come together annually to consider progress and to input ideas about delivery and development.

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. The review was informed by stakeholder workshops, the outputs and evaluation of the two regional land use pilot projects, a public consultation on the draft Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021, and by on-going policy considerations. It reflects the changing landscape of ideas since 2011. Further information on the review process, such as related documentation on the pilot projects and public consultation, including the Consultation Report, 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 did not 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, including through the Land Reform (Scotland) Bill, 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

The Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021 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 second Land Use 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 with the central components remaining in place. The Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021 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 and where appropriate a broad indication of next steps and timing is provided in this document. These are presented under 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.

Next Steps

We will develop and publish a more detailed reporting framework by December 2016.

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 2016 - 2021. Our Vision is to 2050 and is a high level strategic statement which reflects the varied nature of the interactions between different interests and land use. It is equally applicable across a wide range of interests for example land and water management, health, recreation, education and cultural heritage.

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 and strategic framework for land use policy. In a rapidly changing world it is important that we have overarching objectives to provide a consistent framework to guide the development of more specific policy over time. The three Objectives below provide that consistency and are designed to give structure to a range of different policy areas rather than deal in specific aspects of policy development. All three Objectives carry equal weight.

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 five years, in part due to the influence of the first Land Use Strategy, and this section highlights how the 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 economic 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. This has helped in identifying some of the initial actions required to assist industry in realising the outcomes in the document. 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 this Land Use Strategy. We also recognise that many other sectors rely upon land as a vital component of their business. The decisions made about land use can affect them less directly or in some case have a significant impact: examples includes tourism providers, recreation based businesses, renewable energy, and the heritage sector.

Many of our land based businesses are intimately tied into the system of incentives set by the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Now that the latest 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 Land Use 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 second Land Use 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. We also need to consider the potential impact of climate change and what we can do now to mitigate or adapt to future climate change. Since the publication of the first Land Use 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 Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) 2014-20 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 Land Use Strategy two pilot projects have been undertaken 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 and to understand the wider implications of specific decisions. The Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021 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 shift in approach.

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 firewood 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 recently passed **Land Reform (Scotland) Bill** also impacts on land use. It includes a requirement for the creation of a Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement which will contain a set of principles to guide the development of public policy on the nature and character of land rights and responsibilities in Scotland. The Bill also requires Scottish Ministers to issue guidance about engaging communities in decisions relating to land and provides for a new right to buy for communities in order to further sustainable development. 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 one million acres of land in community ownership by 2020.

The Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021 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. We also recognise the need to assist communities to become more resilient to climate change impacts, for example land use decisions can assist local communities to prepare and respond to adverse weather events. Land use partnerships (Policy 7) are one way to help people consider what the impacts of climate change may look like for their community and what land use related mitigation or adaptation actions might be taken.

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, building stronger connections between people and land, and helping communities to engage with climate change and build their resilience to climate change impacts.

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](#) and [Scottish Planning Policy](#) recognise their value when making decisions about the use and management of Scotland's land. Scottish Planning Policy, for example, includes advice to planning authorities about using the Principles.

The Principles offer a more extensive way to approach land use decisions and encourage consideration of a much wider range of implications and impacts than is possible with a sectoral approach. Not all Principles will be applicable in every situation. However, some, such as Principle a, dealing with multiple benefits, or Principle f, dealing with climate change, are likely to be broadly applicable.

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 Land Use Strategy 2016 - 2021. 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 2016 – 2021 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 2016 – 2021 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. Our consideration of natural resources needs to include climate change, both how climate change may impact, and also how we may use the environment to assist us to mitigate against some of the impacts of climate change.

The use of an ecosystems approach is a helpful means to better understand our environment and factor it into decisions. An ecosystems approach is an inclusive approach to looking after the natural environment and is defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity as '*a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way*'. In simple terms this means working with nature in order to achieve a healthy environment for people and nature. It recognises that all aspects of the environment, including humans, are interrelated and should not be viewed in isolation. Plans, policies, strategies and projects are evaluated against a set of criteria which aim to

involve people, take account of the services that ecosystems provide and taking account of how ecosystems work. More detail is provided in the Scottish Government information note on [Applying an Ecosystems Approach to Land Use](#). The work of the land use pilot projects in Aberdeenshire and the Scottish Borders have demonstrated the use of an ecosystems approach. This work, along with that of our key delivery partners such as Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and our two national parks, has contributed to understanding what this approach means in practice.

There have been considerable developments in the field of natural capital since the publication of the first Land Use Strategy and an update to the [Natural Capital Asset Index](#) published by SNH in 2015, the World Forum on Natural Capital and the formation of the Scottish Forum on Natural Capital.

Scotland's natural capital is the stock of natural assets, such as soil, water, trees, woodland, biodiversity or peatland. As humans we benefit from the services which are provided by these natural assets, for example we derive food, clean water, fibre and pollination. These benefits, also known as ecosystem services, are the things which make human life possible. They also contribute to our economic prosperity and overall health and wellbeing. It is important that we recognise their importance and the need to keep these assets in a healthy state. We also need to understand that some, such as cultural services, are less visible than others and not underestimate the value to society of these less obvious assets.

We acknowledge the importance of taking our natural resources into account in the way 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 approach to natural resource management set out in Policy 1 underpins the way we will implement other policies and proposals in the Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021 and across Government.

Policy Alignment

Policy 2: The Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021 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.

The Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021 has a vital role to play in delivering [A Stronger Scotland, The Government’s Programme for Scotland 2015-16](#) and subsequent Programmes, and [Scotland’s Economic Strategy](#). However, feedback from stakeholders has indicated that the relationship between the Land Use Strategy and other Government policies is not always clear. This policy statement and the diagram below clarify the relationship between key Government policy and strategy documents. The diagram is not comprehensive and uses the plans and policies most closely related in subject matter to the Land Use Strategy 2016 - 2021. It is also important to recognise that policy alignment and influence may be horizontal as well as vertical and that this is not easy to represent 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 Land Use Strategy contributes primarily to the following National Performance Framework 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 Rights and Responsibilities Statement		Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Programme		Low Carbon Scotland: The Second Report on Proposals and Policies		Land Use Strategy	National Planning Framework 3 & Scottish Planning Policy		Regeneration Strategy	Scotland's National Marine Plan
Sectoral Plans, Policies and Strategies	The Future of Scottish Agriculture	River Basin Management Plans	Scotland Rural Development Programme, including LEADER	*Strategic Vision for the Uplands	Scotland's National Food & Drink Policy	Flood Risk Management Plan for Scotland 2016	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; and,
- information on the use of an ecosystems approach in Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), which in turn supports development.

National Planning Framework 3 refers directly to the Land Use Strategy and the Principles for Sustainable Land Use. It highlights the importance of delivering multiple benefits from land and the need to recognise that the environment is a functioning ecosystem within 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 for Sustainable Land Use.

The planning system and local planning authorities are already delivering against the Objectives of the Land Use Strategy and the application of the Principles is a matter of good planning. Opportunities for community engagement are built into both the preparation of development plans and 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 Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021 and the Principles for Sustainable Land Use. Although the Scottish Government is clear that the planning system is a delivery mechanism for the second Land Use Strategy, the alignment between the Land Use Strategy and planning is not always well understood.

We are aware that we could do more to highlight the potential added value that the Land Use Strategy 2016 - 2021 can bring, in particular, the consideration of an ecosystems approach and the delivery of multiple benefits. We propose to undertake a programme of information and awareness-raising to ensure that this added value is fully recognised.

SEA is a statutory requirement for all development plans (as well as other qualifying plans, programmes and strategies). Since the publication of the first Land Use

Strategy, considerable work has been undertaken on the use of an ecosystems approach in SEA and there is good practice and advice to share. We are committed to the publication of an information note on the use of an ecosystems approach in SEA. Once this is available, we will undertake a programme of information and awareness raising with SEA and planning professionals on the use of this approach in decision making.

Activities to increase understanding of the relevance of the Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021 will provide an opportunity to highlight the contribution that planning and land use can make to climate change adaptation and mitigation. Increased use of an ecosystem approach will support climate mitigation and adaption action through the planning system.

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 2016 – 2021 when they emerge.

Next steps

The relationship between the Land Use Strategy and the planning system will be informed by the outcome of the on-going review of the Scottish planning system, expected later in 2016.

We will work in partnership with the Royal Town Planning Institute Scotland, local authorities, strategic development plan partnerships and others to develop a programme of events for delivery during 2017.

We will publish an information note on the use of an ecosystems approach in SEA in mid-2016 and will undertake awareness raising with SEA practitioners and other relevant bodies and groups.

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 have a part to play in reducing the risk from climate change for the people and biodiversity of Scotland; the forestry sector saw a 3.0MtCO₂e (42%) increase in its carbon sink between 1990 and 2013.

To increase its role in addressing the challenge Scotland faces from climate change, a target of 100,000 ha of new woodland creation between 2012 - 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.

A potential role exists for farm businesses in delivering benefits to climate change and biodiversity by combining traditional upland agri-land uses with woodland/forestry. Going forward, industry and government will be working in collaboration to consider the opportunities available to land managers to do this.

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.

Next steps

Forestry Commission Scotland will co-ordinate a review of the Scottish Forestry Strategy and ensure it aligns closely with the policies and proposals outlined in the Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021 and other relevant Scottish Government policy. The Scottish Forestry Strategy will set a vision and direction for all Scotland's forests and woodlands and the range of economic, social and environmental benefits that they provide.

Land Reform

Policy 5: We will develop and consult on the draft of a first Land Rights and Responsibilities Statement which will contain principles to guide the development of public policy on the rights and responsibilities in relation to the ownership, use and management of land.

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 (LRRS), which proposes a vision and set of principles to guide the development of public policy on the nature and character of land rights and responsibilities in Scotland, and have included a requirement to prepare and publish the LRRS within the recently passed Land Reform (Scotland) Bill.

Stakeholders have provided their views on the proposed LRRS as part of the 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 LRRS, and land use, in the Land Use Strategy, as well as other policies that relate to land. This theme was also reflected in many of the responses to the consultation on the draft Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021.

Scottish Ministers feel there continues to be a strong need to consider land use through the Land Use Strategy, and to consider land rights and responsibilities, through the proposed LRRS. However, Scottish Ministers agree with the majority of respondents to the consultation on the draft Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021 that there are advantages to having an overarching statement that deals with ownership, use and management of land. Scottish Ministers feel that this can be carried forward in the requirement for publication of the LRRS which will contain principles on land rights and responsibilities to guide the development of public policy in relation to land. This will include principles which relate to ownership, use and management of land.

The LRRS will provide an integrated approach for considering policy on land ownership, use and management including the contribution that land can make to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The LRRS will not remove or override the Land Use Strategy, which is a statutory requirement. The LRRS will work together with the Land Use Strategy, Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, National Planning Framework and other Government policies, in order to set out a consistent and holistic approach to how all land should be owned, used and managed.

Next Steps

We will develop and consult on the draft of a first LRRS which will contain principles to guide the development of public policy on the rights and responsibilities in relation to the ownership, use and management of land. We recognise the utility of improved integration of Scottish Government policies and strategies relating to land and intend the LRRS to be a step forward in achieving this goal.

This work will be taken forward in conjunction with the implementation of the Land Reform (Scotland) Bill.

3.2 Informed Decision Making

From the outset the first Land Use Strategy 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 bring together all those with an interest in land in their locality. This effective use of data is underpinned by the wider data agenda. The Data Management Board established by the 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 seek to make data more accessible and useful, and to improve how it is used so that it may assist in underpinning decision making. We also recognise that access to information can help empower communities and stakeholders in terms of land use decision making. This is a key objective of more open and accessible data.

Ecosystem Services Mapping and Tools

Policy 6: 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. Other organisations and groups have similarly made good use of the range of data now available.

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. [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 to the Open Data Strategy. 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 acknowledge 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 scoping the development of 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.

Utilising more localised map based ecosystems assessment has the potential to contribute to a greater understanding of the effects of climate change and their impacts on the natural environment. This is a key objective of the Climate Change Adaptation Programme - increased sharing of data between organisations, including improved access to data provided through SE Web and new methods and protocols for producing improved flood hazard and risk maps and data license management that enables sharing across partner organisations.

Scotland-wide ecosystem services mapping has the potential to contribute to spatial initiatives such as the natural flood management objectives in the River Basin Management Plans and woodland creation opportunity mapping.

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.

Next Steps

We will continue to encourage the availability and compatibility of ecosystem services data and will work towards ensuring that as much of that data as possible is available through public online mapping services such as SE Web or the Atlas of Living Scotland.

We will scope the development of an online mapping tool. Scoping will commence in 2017.

Regional Land Use Partnerships

Policy 7: We will encourage the establishment of regional land use partnerships

In order to progress better integration of land uses and better understanding of land use and climate change 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 pilot projects shows 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. In addition, land use partnerships have the potential to focus effort on climate change objectives where appropriate. They could assist local communities in building community resilience to climate change issues and addressing particular mitigation or adaptation issues.

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 1 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 pressures may be more appropriate in some areas. While further work is required to develop clear guidance and to clarify roles and functions for regional land use partnerships, we wish to maintain the momentum generated by the work of the two land use pilots and to explore the feasibility of extending such approaches to a catchment scale. This will increase our understanding and enable known issues to be tackled while we develop more general and widely applicable guidance that will support the delivery of multiple benefits.

Next Steps

To build on the work of the two land use pilot projects we will extend our approach to a catchment scale which will further test the methodology and tackle particular issues in those localities.

We will establish a limited life expert group to assist with developing guidance in relation to regional partnerships. This will include consideration of the potential status, role, remit, function, stakeholder involvement, relationship to existing initiatives and groups, leadership and spatial coverage of regional partnerships. This group will report by end 2017.

Regional Land Use Frameworks

Proposal 1: We will further explore the development of regional land use frameworks for rural areas of Scotland.

The Land Use Strategy pilot projects have demonstrated a range of possible benefits from developing regional land use frameworks including contributing to climate change objectives by identifying suitable areas for tree planting, peatland restoration, flood risk management, natural flood management measures, and areas most likely to deliver multiple benefits. In this way they can help to ensure that climate change is fully factored into decisions about land use.

The independent evaluation and the feedback from the pilot projects 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 can consider rolling out this approach more widely. In particular the role of regional partnerships will be crucial to success. We need to ensure that both the data and GIS work under Policy 6 is more advanced and the role and remit for regional land use partnerships (Policy 7) is also more fully developed before we can make progress with regional land use frameworks.

Once the expert group referred to under Policy 7 has completed the work highlighted in relation to regional partnerships we will ask them to consider regional frameworks.

Next Steps

Upon completion of the tasks associated with Policy 7 the limited life expert group will be reconstituted and asked to consider:

- The status of regional frameworks, their usage and their relationship to statutory development plans;
- The potential 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 development of tools and guidance for the preparation of regional land use frameworks.

This group will report by end 2018.

Land Use Mediation and Facilitation

Proposal 2: 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 emphasise the importance the Scottish Government places on engaging and empowering communities. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) 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 (Scotland) Bill contains provisions 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. The importance of early dialogue and engagement between landowners and communities was also identified by the One Million Acre Short Life Working Group. 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.

Next Steps

We will develop and consult on proposals. The close relationship with proposed regional land use partnerships means that this will take place after the expert group referred to in Policy 7 has reported.

This work will be taken forward in conjunction with the implementation of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, the Land Reform (Scotland) Bill and recommendations contained within the One Million Acre Strategy Report.

3.3 Applying the Principles

The following policies and proposals are about actions which directly apply the Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021 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 8: 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. It is important that agriculture's role, providing a balance between productivity and delivering environmental benefits, is recognised. [Becoming a Good Food Nation](#) highlights the importance of environmentally sound production of food and the need to consider its impact both locally and around the world.

Agriculture is 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 new Farm Advisory Services provision under the SRDP includes a range of measures designed to promote best farming and crofting practice. Amongst other things, this will promote climate change mitigation and adaptation measures through a range of different delivery mechanisms such as face-to-face advice; consultancy support; distribution of technical notes and other web based material; and carbon audits.

In a similar vein, activities such as Farming for a Better Climate and Future Proofing Scotland's Farming promote the uptake of adaptation measures, which help to increase the resilience of agriculture to climate change and also a suite of mitigation measures.

In addition, the Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Fund under the SRDP provides support for complimentary project based initiatives to facilitate knowledge exchange, innovation and climate friendly best practice in farming and crofting. There is also the beef efficiency scheme which is a five-year scheme aiming to help beef breeders improve their efficiency and aiming to deliver sustainable beef production while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

[The Future of Scottish Agriculture – A Discussion Document](#) sets out our aspirations for a greener, innovative and profitable agriculture industry. This vision includes a number of outcomes, one of which is to be world leading in green farming. This outcome will be realised through 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; 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 as they have an important contribution to make.

As part of the recent national discussion on the future of Scottish agriculture, farmers and land managers have provided their thoughts to the Scottish Government on these outcomes. This has helped in identifying some of the initial 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.

Next Steps

To help deliver the Agriculture Vision's aspiration that Scotland is a world-leader in green farming, we will work in partnership with stakeholders to explore opportunities to encourage a step-change in agriculture, where farmers combine environmentally and commercially successful management in the running of their businesses. For example, we will explore the scope to incentivise sustainable farming practices through CAP measures like cross compliance, greening and SRDP. We will provide information on 'win-win' practices that benefit both the environment and farm businesses through the Farm Advisory Service and demonstration farms. We will also explore the scope to use marketing and branding tools to recognise and reward improvements in sustainability.

Through 2016 we will work with industry, science and environmental stakeholders to create new policies to reduce both the total greenhouse gas emissions associated with agriculture, and the intensity of emissions from livestock. We will focus on improving soil fertility, tackling livestock disease and increasing efficiency in fertiliser and fuel use. These new policies will be included in the RPP3, which will be published in December 2016.

Agri-Environment

Policy 9: We will continue to develop a targeted approach in the current 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 pilot projects 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 6) this will be used to inform decisions for the current SRDP measures. Regional land use frameworks (Proposal 1) and partnerships (Policy 7) also 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.

Next Steps

We will explore the role which regional land use partnerships and frameworks can play in developing map-based ecosystem assessment and their use in targeting in the current SRDP Agri-Environment Climate Scheme. This will be part of the remit for the expert group referred to under Policy 7 and Proposal 1.

Agri-Environment

Proposal 3: 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 delivery of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy by enabling ecosystem enhancement and restoration where it is most needed and provide a means to address climate change issues. Similarly, The Future of Scottish Agriculture – A Discussion Document sets out next steps which include using Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 incentives to recognise and reward delivery of environmental benefits and integrated land use.

In addition to the work of the land use pilot projects, 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 on-going work on cross compliance and greening.

A package of agri-environment measures under the next SRDP which are locally focused and targeted, driven by ecosystem health measures and address climate change issues could offer considerable potential to deliver better environmental outcomes and maximise the return on investment of public money

Next Steps

We will commission a feasibility study to consider using an assessment of ecosystem health and a spatial approach to inform a targeted approach to agri-environment in the next SRDP (post 2020). This will be commissioned by 2017.

Urban Land Use

Proposal 4: We will explore the feasibility of establishing an urban land use pilot project.

The Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021 applies across the whole of Scotland and is equally applicable in urban and rural areas. To date, the work of our two land use 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. It is also important that we understand the relationships between urban and rural areas, the peri-urban interface and how an urban area relates to its rural hinterland. Such a project will enable us to gain a better understanding of the role that the Land Use Strategy 2016 – 2021 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. It will take into account existing initiatives, such as projects that are being delivered through River Basin Management Plans.

Next Steps

We will prepare a proposal for an urban pilot project. This will explore the application of the Land Use Strategy Principles to an urban area and the relationships between urban and rural areas. The proposal will be developed by mid-2017.

Upland Land Use

Proposal 5: 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 Scottish Government's approach to reducing emissions from the rural land use sector is guided by the Land Use Strategy which supports an integrated approach to managing the competing demands we place on our land resource. 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 in terms of mitigation and adaptation such as carbon storage in peatland areas, flood mitigation resulting from tree planting and riparian management and renewable energy opportunities. Upland enterprises also play an important role in maintaining communities in remote regions.

However, upland areas 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 2016 – 2021 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 the uplands 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, and we acknowledge 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 preparation of 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.

Next Steps

We will commission Scottish Natural Heritage to scope the preparation of a strategic vision for the uplands by end 2016.

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 Land Use Strategy, they represent key aspects of the Strategy Objectives and provide a balanced picture of important representative elements. We consider that these indicators provide robust national datasets and remain fit for purpose. In order to provide background, the national indicators are supplemented by related indicators and information to provide useful context. Further information on trends illustrated by the indicators and contextual indicators and information can be found on the Land Use Strategy [webpages](#).

The indicators are shown below, and supplementary information and data is provided on the Scottish Government website. The relationship of indicators to the Land Use Strategy's three long term Objectives is also shown.

	Indicator and context	Land Use Strategy Objective
1	Land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) greenhouse gas emissions <i>Supplemented with information on renewable energy</i>	all
2	Gross Value Added (GVA) in agriculture and forestry <i>Supplemented with information on Total Income from Farming.</i>	1
3	Scottish tourism visits <i>Supplemented with information on regional tourism, information from the Moffatt Centre and Scotland Visitor Survey</i>	1 and 3
4	High nature value farming and forestry <i>Supplemented by information on the favourable condition target</i>	1 and 2
5	Natural Capital Asset Index (NCAI) <i>Supplemented with information from UK National</i>	2

<i>Ecosystem Assessment</i>		
6	Water ecological status	2
	<i>Supplemented by information on river water quality</i>	
7	Terrestrial breeding birds	2
	<i>Supplemented by information on Scottish Natural Heritage Trend Notes and Farmland Bird Trends in Scotland</i>	
8	Volunteering in nature	2 and 3
	<i>Supplemented by information from the Scottish Nature Omnibus</i>	
9	Visits to the outdoors	3
	<i>Supplemented by data on the use made of greenspace</i>	
10	Community inclusion in land use decision making	3
	<i>Supplemented by information on Forestry Commission Scotland indicators and the Scotland's People and Nature Survey (SPANS)</i>	

4.2 Future Reporting

We welcome an on-going 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 Land Use Strategy 2016 - 2021, as well as information on events and resources.

As set out above we will develop and publish a more detailed reporting framework by December 2016.

The Land Use Strategy webpages currently provide a range of information including publications and reports and the [Land Use Data Directory](#). These pages will be regularly reviewed and updated.

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).

Annex B Glossary

This glossary provides a guide to terms as they are used in the Land Use Strategy.

biodiversity	The variety of life on Earth.
carbon	A chemical element which is part of many greenhouse gases, for example carbon dioxide and methane. Greenhouse gas emissions are reported in carbon dioxide equivalents – for which ‘carbon’ is often used as shorthand.
carbon sequestration	Processes that remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.
community	The term community includes individuals and groups, and can be based on location (for example people who live, work or use an area) or common interest (for example the business community, sports or heritage groups).
ecosystem	A dynamic complex of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment, interacting as a functional unit.
the ecosystem approach	A strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way, and which recognises that people with their cultural and varied social needs are an integral part of ecosystems.
ecosystem services	The benefits people obtain from ecosystems; these include provisioning services such as food, water, timber and fibre; regulating services that affect climate, floods, disease, waste and water quality; cultural services with recreational, aesthetic, and spiritual benefits; and supporting services such as soil formation, photosynthesis and nutrient cycling.
land-based businesses	Businesses which derive products and services from the management of land; for example farming, forestry, renewable energy, recreation and tourism.
low-carbon economy	An economy in which less energy and resources are used – domestically, commercially and across the public sector; where energy increasingly comes from sources that produce fewer carbon emissions, such as water, wind, wave and solar power; and where economic opportunities from efficiencies and saving carbon are realised.

prime agricultural land	Land which is capable of producing the widest variety of crops (identified as being of Class 1, 2 or 3.1 in the land capability classification for agriculture, as developed by the Macaulay Land Use Research Institute).
public goods	Goods that cannot be withheld from people, even if they do not pay for them.
sustainable development	Development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
sustainable land use	Land use that makes its best possible contribution to fulfilling our Objectives, with regard to the Principles in this Strategy, whilst maintaining the land's capacity for future use
vacant and derelict land	<p>Vacant land is land which is unused for the purposes for which it is held and is viewed as an appropriate site for development. This land must either have had prior development on it or preparatory work has taken place in anticipation of future development.</p> <p>Derelict land is land which has been so damaged by development, that it is incapable of development for beneficial use without rehabilitation. In addition the land must currently not be used for the purpose for which it is held or a use acceptable in the local plan. Land also qualifies as derelict if it has an unremedied previous use which could constrain future development.</p>
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy, a system of European Union agricultural subsidies and programmes
FCS	Forestry Commission Scotland
LEADER	<p>A European Union initiative for rural development with a particular community focus, implemented in Scotland through the SRDP – see http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/farmingrural/SRDP/LEADER. LEADER stands for (in the French language) Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Economie Rurale</p>
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SRDP	<p>Scotland Rural Development Programme, a programme of economic, environmental and social measures, designed to develop rural Scotland from 2007 to 2013 (see http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/farmingrural/SRDP)</p>



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EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-78652-115-6 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, March 2016

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA
PPDAS64436 (03/16)

W W W . G O V . S C O T