

SCOTLAND'S FUTURE LANDSCAPES?



*Encouraging a wider debate*

**SCOTLAND'S FUTURE LANDSCAPES?**  
***Moving the Debate Forward***

**Report of Seminar**

Dewars Centre, Perth

16 September 2004

A DISCUSSION PAPER  
FROM SCOTTISH  
NATURAL HERITAGE

## PREFACE

In November 2003, SNH issued a consultation paper on *Scotland's Future Landscapes? – Encouraging a Wider Debate* which aimed to stimulate debate on the issues facing Scotland's landscapes and the measures needed to address them. Over 5000 paper copies of the consultation paper were distributed, and some 228 responses were received from a range of interests from across the nation. SNH very much saw this consultation as the start of a process of debate leading to action for Scotland's landscapes. To this end, in September this year we held a national seminar for responders to the consultation, and others interested in the subject. Our intention was to allow for reflection on the views we had heard to date, and for further debate on the way ahead.

We were very encouraged by the high level of interest in this seminar, and the lively, informed and passionate nature of the discussion on the day. This document provides an account of the proceedings. It contains transcripts of the talks given, and summaries of the discussion that took place during the day in the various workshops and closing plenary session. A list of those who attended appears in Annex A.

SNH thanks all those who responded to the discussion paper and attended the seminar for their thoughtful contributions.

**Scottish Natural Heritage  
December 2004**

## SEMINAR AGENDA

10.30	Welcome and introduction to the day	Chair – Lady Isabel Glasgow (SNH Board)
<b>Scotland's landscape agenda</b>		
10.40	The state of Scotland's landscapes - living places or eroding assets?	Dr Patricia Macdonald (Environmental interpreter and Artist-photographer)
11.00	<i>Scotland's future landscapes?</i> – the response to SNH's discussion paper	Simon Brooks (SNH)
11.25	Workshop 1 <i>1. What are the issues facing Scotland's landscape that need to be tackled as a priority</i> <i>2. For each of the 'top five' issues, what actions are required to address these, and by whom?</i>	
12.15	LUNCH	
<b>Taking forward the landscape agenda</b>		
13.15	Advocating landscape policy in Ireland - a 10 year odyssey	Terry O'Regan (Landscape Alliance Ireland)
13.45	Questions to Terry O'Regan	
14.00	Building a programme of action for Scotland's landscapes– some thoughts	John Thomson (SNH)
14.25	Workshop 2 <i>3. How can we promote landscape interests in a positive way, to ensure it gets adequate attention at both the national and local level?</i> <i>4. Is a national landscape forum, or some other form of working group required, to provide a focus for all our landscape efforts?</i>	
15:15	TEA	
15.35	Feedback from Workshops 1 and 2	Workshop facilitators
15.55	Plenary discussion	Chair
16.15	Next steps	John Thomson (SNH)
16.25	Close	Chair

## NOTE ON THE CHAIR AND SPEAKERS

**Lady Isabel Glasgow** is a member of the SNH Main Board and Chairwoman of the SNH West Areas Board. She is co-founder of Kelburn Country Centre in Ayrshire. She is a member of the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority, and is also, amongst other involvements, on the Scottish Council for National Parks, the Moorland Forum and Firth of Clyde Forum.

**Dr Patricia Macdonald BSc FRSE FRSA FSA(Scot) HonFRSGS** is an environmental interpreter with extensive experience, ranging from government agencies and the museum sector to non-governmental organisations. She is an award-winning artist-photographer who exhibits and publishes internationally (author/co-author of seven books and numerous other publications), and specialises in aerial imagery in an environmental context. She is currently a partner in Aerographica and an Honorary Fellow of the School of Arts, Culture and Environment at the University of Edinburgh, where she is a member of a team planning courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level on cultural landscape studies. She is a former member of the SNH Main Board, and a former trustee of the John Muir Trust.

**Simon Brooks** is a National Strategy Officer with SNH, based in Inverness. He has responsibility for taking forward SNH's landscape policy work, including the preparation of SNH's advice on National Scenic Areas (1999) and the production of SNH's discussion paper *Scotland's future landscapes? – Encouraging a wider debate* (2003). He can be contacted at [simon.brooks@snh.gov.uk](mailto:simon.brooks@snh.gov.uk).

**Terry O' Regan, B.Agr.Sc.(Hort), M.I.L.I.**, a graduate of University College Dublin with over 30 years' experience of the landscape industry in Ireland through the BHL Landscape Group Ltd., now practises as a landscape and environmental consultant. Founder of Landscape Alliance Ireland and the National Landscape Forum series and founding chairperson of the LA21 body Cork Environmental Forum, he has championed the case for landscape policy over some 10 years. He participated in the development of the European Landscape Convention and has written and lectured extensively on all aspects of landscape evolution, quality and management in Ireland and Europe. He has contributed to and edited the proceedings of the National Landscape Forum and created the web-site [www.landscape-forum-ireland.com](http://www.landscape-forum-ireland.com). He can be contacted at [lai.link@indigo.ie](mailto:lai.link@indigo.ie).

**John Thomson** is Director for Strategy and Operations (West) with SNH. He has strategic responsibility for SNH's work on rural development, land use, planning, transport and landscape, including Scotland's only national landscape designation, the National Scenic Area. He can be contacted at [john.thomson@snh.gov.uk](mailto:john.thomson@snh.gov.uk).

## WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

*Lady Isabel Glasgow (SNH Board Member)*

The purpose of this seminar is twofold: to present the outcome of Scottish Natural Heritage's consultation on its discussion paper published in November 2003, and to look forward and consider how the debate that the discussion paper has stirred can be taken forward. The seminar provides an opportunity to share views and ideas, and debate the action that is required to ensure all Scotland's landscapes are given the attention and care that they deserve.

SNH believes strongly that Scotland's landscapes are one of the nations greatest assets, contributing to people's quality of life, a sense of identity be it local, regional or national, and bringing very tangible benefits through the tourism it attracts and business it supports. This is a resource that we should rightly be proud of, and whose stewardship and long-term care is of interest to all in Scotland. All of us, wherever we reside, should be able to live and work in surroundings that we appreciate and value.

But SNH questions whether we are achieving this, and asks if we are giving our landscapes adequate attention. Whilst there are examples of positive change that we can all think of – sensitive design of new development, or enhancement of degraded landscapes - we can also all recognise insensitive or damaging modifications to our landscapes. Some may be sudden, prominent and extensive, but our landscapes are also evolving through gradual change. SNH's discussion paper highlighted some of these changes, and suggested that we need to consider more carefully the landscapes we wish to have in the future. In proposing this SNH's paper also sought to clarify what this discussion is, and is not, about.

- First, we are interested in **all landscapes** – not just the special, outstanding and highly scenic, but also the common and familiar. All landscapes are of value to those who live and work in them, and therefore deserve attention.
- Second, this is not a debate about stopping development and frustrating change in our landscapes, but **guiding and manage change**. This is not a preservationist agenda, and although SNH believe that most change should fit with existing landscape character, it is neither possible nor desirable to retain existing character everywhere. But we need to raise our sights, and ensure not only that change is not damaging, but that it contributes positively to our landscapes.
- Third, SNH recognises that action to address Scotland's landscapes requires a **collective approach**. The concept of 'landscape' encompasses a wide range of perspectives and interests, and SNH does not have the statutory responsibility to lead on all of these – for example cultural and artistic values are the responsibility of other bodies. Action is therefore dependent upon, as well as strengthened by, a recognition of the common interest and shared responsibility for this resource.

This breadth of interest is illustrated by the number of individuals and the range of organisations attending the seminar. This is a very welcome indication of people's interest in Scotland's landscape, and you are all encouraged to contribute to this debate both during the seminar, and in the future.

## THE STATE OF SCOTLAND'S LANDSCAPES: LIVING PLACES OR ERODING ASSETS?

*Dr Patricia Macdonald (Environmental interpreter - Artist-photographer)<sup>1</sup>*

Before addressing the title of this brief talk, I would like to provide a quick reminder of the landscape resource that we will be discussing in the seminar. I was until recently a member of the Main Board of Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), and so I would also like to take the opportunity to draw your attention to the published products of two large bodies of work carried out in the last few years by SNH, both of which provide accessible background material highly relevant to the second of these purposes – the possible ways forward. These bodies of work are:

- the comprehensive programme of Landscape Character Assessment, to which I will return; and
- the excellent series of 28 publications<sup>2</sup> entitled *Natural Heritage Futures*. This series, which is made up of both 'national' and 'regional' prospectuses from 21 'natural heritage areas', and which takes account of the views of a wide range of partner organisations, is a substantial contribution to putting sustainable development into practice. It has been described as 'a bold and imaginative way of establishing some high-level objectives for the natural heritage of Scotland'. A highly significant component of the natural heritage of Scotland is its landscape, and landscape is considered throughout these publications alongside other aspects of the natural heritage from which it should not be separated.

To remind us of the world-class landscape resource, both rural and urban, that we have in Scotland, I would like to begin by paraphrasing a section from the *Overview* publication from *Natural Heritage Futures*:

*Our natural heritage is hugely diverse, very distinctive, and highly regarded at home and overseas. The superlatives are justified. For its size Scotland has the most varied geology and natural landscapes of any country on the planet ... We have enormously rich marine environments, just as amazing as any tropical seas, ... a coastline longer and more varied than any in the world for a country of its size, and very extensive near-natural upland landscapes reflecting a combination of Arctic and alpine conditions in an oceanic setting. Some features, such as the ancient oak woodlands ... or the extensive moss- and lichen-rich moorlands of the west coast are unique manifestations of the moist oceanic climate of north-west Europe. The machair lands of the Hebridean islands reflect a wonderfully delicate balance between nature and human activity.*

*Many aspects of our natural heritage [including our landscapes] are not rare but they are special in a British and European context. The key elements combine to form distinctive areas throughout Scotland: vast tracts of [blanket bog or heather moorland] with patches of birch woodlands and the roar of a stag and [the] 'go-back' of a grouse; glistening expanses of lochs and lochans, linked by rivers and [burns] with their salmon stocks in the straths and glens; marsh thistles in wet rushy pastures with the drumming of a snipe or whaup of a curlew; the rolling patchwork of farmland; the distinctive 'cnoc-and-lochan' landscapes of the north-west; or the flat carselands punctuated by isolated hills and laws in the Central Belt [and the Lothians]; [farms and] estates with their ... hedges and avenues of oaks and parklands with veteran trees; rocky coastlines contrasting with expanses of sandy beaches; ...*

*The diversity of Scotland's landscapes inspire people – they provide an essential sense of place for those who live and work here, and those who visit for enjoyment. The key elements are mainly aesthetic and emotive – the interplay between land and water; the wildness and*

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<sup>1</sup> This talk was illustrated with 70 photographs, mainly aerial images by Patricia & Angus Macdonald, supplemented by ground-level images and maps from SNH's photographic library. This text-only version has been modified to compensate for the lack of these.

<sup>2</sup> *Natural Heritage Futures* series, Scottish Natural Heritage, Battleby, 2002.

*roughness; the perceived naturalness; the grandeur of outstanding landscapes; a settlement against the backdrop of the hills ... The aesthetic appeal is greatly enhanced by low, northern light and the ever-changing effects of our oceanic weather.*

*The natural heritage comprises the habitats, species, rocks, landforms [and landscapes] of Scotland, and [their] natural beauty and amenity. However, it needs to be viewed as an integrated whole: not just as particular species or special areas [or landscapes], and certainly not excluding people. The various components form the great variety of green spaces in and around our settlements, and all the different kinds of countryside and coast. The natural heritage comprises all of these and their interaction – the land, the sea and all of the community of life these support, including people. ...*

*The quality of people's lives depends upon having a healthy, attractive, and effectively functioning environment, as well as upon robust social structures and a viable economy. The aim of achieving all of these things together is captured in the term 'sustainable development', which Tim O'Riordan describes as 'nurturing and enhancing the life support processes of the planet, by ensuring that all people are fairly and justly enabled to do so consciously and collectively, in such a way as to maintain reliable livelihoods – all this needs to be achieved so that everyone in the future can also follow the same route'<sup>3</sup>.*

So, with such a world-class resource on our doorsteps, in terms of both rural and of urban and peri-urban settings, and also in terms of both special areas and of more familiar places, why should we be here today to discuss taking forward an agenda concerning Scotland's future landscapes? Why should this process be necessary? Are Scotland's landscapes in fact 'living places' for the most part, or are too many of them actually 'eroding assets'?

As I have just quoted: '*The quality of people's lives depends upon having a healthy, attractive, and effectively functioning environment, as well as upon robust social structures and a viable economy*' – the familiar, so-called 'three pillars of sustainability'. In my own opinion, although others might disagree – since 'landscape' is by definition a subjective term – the quality of people's landscapes, in inhabited parts of the world, *also* depends upon these same criteria.

And if these criteria for sustainability are *not* met – and in present-day Scotland, both Highland and Lowland, both urban and rural, they are still often not met – a landscape cannot be a 'living place', and therefore cannot be pleasing. It may be aesthetically interesting to some people: as a ruin, a fossil, an empty shell, in terms of its devastated character or its feeling of being at 'the end of the world'. But that same landscape may also be, for others, a reminder of distressing historical losses – an 'eroding asset', if indeed they consider it to be an asset at all. For these individuals and communities, these same views, degraded in terms of ecology, human population and community, may provoke feelings of either sorrow or anger or both.

So landscape is not simply an aesthetic issue. Everyone has a sense of place – the identification of something distinct about the places we know – which operates at a range of scales, from the place where we live, to the setting of our community, to the wider region of which it forms a part, and so on outwards. Discussion of sense of place highlights that landscape is an issue that has people at its centre – it is not only about the physical fabric of geology and biosphere and climate, but also about the meanings and associations we attach to it, whether positive or negative. This subjective element at the heart of the concept of landscape makes it in some ways a more difficult subject to address, but also ensures that it is a subject that is of considerable interest to most people. The reconciliation of differences of viewpoint and opinion to achieve a consensus for action is one of the most problematic aspects of taking forward the landscape agenda.

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<sup>3</sup> *An Overview*, pp 4-6, from *Natural Heritage Futures* series, Scottish Natural Heritage, Battleby, 2002, ISBN 1-85397-145-6.

Alongside these questions of differing perspectives and perceptions has developed an attempt at the objective consideration of the landscape – the professional analysis known as Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) mentioned earlier. Due to the activities of SNH in this area, Scotland is now one of the leading countries in Europe in this field, having completed and published LCA statements on 274 distinct landscape character types identified across the country, and the key forces for change within these<sup>4</sup>.

But although the LCA process provides a very useful basis of relatively uncontroversial physical fact from which to begin discussions involving more subjective issues, its engagement with differing perceptions of landscape, and with the processes of change, whether past, present or future, is necessarily limited.

The present-day diversity of our landscapes is obviously a result of past change, natural and human-induced, planned and unplanned. Some significant past changes have been relatively sudden, such as those brought about by large-scale afforestation, hydro-power or quarrying developments. Others have been more gradual, and these are the ones that we tend either to forget or to be completely unaware of. Such changes include the growth of housing at the urban edge or the replacement of rural housing by more suburban bungalow styles. Other gradual changes have until recently been even more likely to go unnoticed, at least by those other than ecologists – changes which include the enormous long-term effects of excessive grazing/browsing pressure of deer and sheep, or of over-intense muirburn as part of moorland management – or mismanagement. These long-term effects include the gradual but devastating loss of trees and woodland, and the associated complex losses of shelter, moisture retention, biodiversity and biological productivity, from apparently wild places.

Some past changes have now come to be valued in their own right, in aesthetic terms at least, if not always in ecological or historical social terms – changes such as planned agricultural landscapes, some extensive designed landscapes, and some re-designed crofting landscapes.

Current changes which have provoked considerable outcry are the loss of aesthetic quality and amenity due to the insensitive siting of structures such as wind farms and communication masts and their infrastructure in areas of high value in terms of landscape and tranquil recreation.

We need to question whether we consider the landscape adequately in current decision-making processes. We also need to question the adequacy of the links between those whose concerns are principally with the appearance and amenity of our surroundings and those whose remits cover mainly economic considerations. These links have been inadequate until recently in relation to many forestry, aquaculture and quarry developments. They remain inadequate possibly in relation to quarry projects, and undoubtedly in relation to wind energy generation, partly due to the way in which the Renewables Obligation (Scotland) was drafted in strictly economic terms, and partly due to the tendency of ‘wildness’ and ‘remoteness’ to coincide with windiness.

And although good organisational links do exist with other policy areas, better mutual understanding across discipline boundaries, and more effective two-way collaboration, could also be developed between those focussed on landscape *per se* and those with responsibility principally for ecology, species, habitats, and ‘cultural landscape’ in the widest, ecological sense of that term. These basic aspects of the natural heritage have enormous,

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<sup>4</sup> *Landscape Character Assessment* series of reports, Scottish Natural Heritage, Battleby, various dates 1994 to 1999.

wide-ranging impacts on the appearance of the landscape, as well as, more fundamentally, upon the 'livingness' or 'erosion' referred to in the title of my talk; and the choices we make in landscape terms have equally enormous reciprocal impacts on ecology and biodiversity. The same statement could also apply to collaboration with those concerned mainly with human artefacts and the narrower, archaeological/historical, definition of 'cultural landscape'.

Different perspectives on landscape in general have already been mentioned. In addition to considering these, we need to recognise that people have differing attitudes to change in the landscape also, for personal, or community-based, or professional/sectoral, reasons. A useful summary of the wide range of different perspectives, or 'values', from which people approach landscape and landscape change is provided in Box 2: 'Understanding the range of values', on page 10 of *Scotland's future landscapes*, although it is arguably incomplete, and could be usefully teased out further. In taking forward an agenda for landscape, we need to find ways of recognising and making use of this diversity, acknowledging the information that each different perspective brings to the ongoing debate. Diversity in this context may be a strength, just as it is in the context of the healthy, fully-functioning biosphere that is needed to underpin the other, economic and social, pillars of sustainability. But the challenge is to make appropriate, fully-functioning links between all of these perspectives, and between the organisations or individuals that represent them.

Although conflicting viewpoints tend to attract disproportionate attention, particularly in the media, many of the agendas involved are actually complementary. It is easy, of course, to point to examples in which there is conflict between interests. For example:

- the growth of vegetation on geological features or on cultural artefacts may distress geologists and archaeologists respectively; or
- aesthetic preferences for treeless hillsides extending below the natural 500-metre tree-line conflicts with the agenda of enhancing native woodland cover, despite the strong case, in terms of both biodiversity and landscape balance, for increasing the current small area of semi-natural woodland in Scotland.

But two aims from separate perspectives can often both be successfully achieved by fostering the same suite of changes. For example, there are often considerable synergies possible between aesthetic, recreational, biodiversity and cultural agendas.

- Better use of greenspace in towns - improves people's experience of their immediate environment; contributes to counteracting local atmospheric pollution and global climate change; and provides gains for biodiversity.
- Increasing deciduous woodland along streamsides promotes the several agendas of: greater aesthetic enjoyment for recreation; enhanced biodiversity; and improved fish stocks for anglers.

Various map- and image-based-information-, simulation- and participation tools for use in the fostering of woodland habitat networks, which are capable of delivering such joint benefits in both urban and rural settings, are currently being developed by the Scottish Forestry Commission, SNH, the Macaulay Land Use Research Institute (MLURI) and others. Some examples may be found in the recent booklet *Habitat networks for wildlife and people*<sup>5</sup> which

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<sup>5</sup> *Habitat networks for wildlife and people: The creation of sustainable forest habitats*, Forestry Commission Scotland/Scottish Natural Heritage, Edinburgh/Battleby, 2003, ISBN 0-85538-299-6. For information and examples of map-based tools and their sources, see especially pp 22 and 41-4; on accessible aerial oblique simulation techniques, see especially pp 14-21, 25-37 and 44.

accompanies the Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme (SFGS 2003), and in which I was involved as a consultant.

The examples of possible synergies that I have just mentioned emphasise a theme in *Scotland's future landscapes* that landscape is very much a shared overall agenda, made up of many individual contributing agendas. In this overall agenda, a wide range of interests need not only to be involved in decisions but also to take responsibility for how we care for our landscapes.

And this brings me, in conclusion, to the most important question: what sort of framework might best facilitate these necessary processes? And this is, of course, the main purpose of today's seminar – how should we move forward on devising such a framework?

One possible, and obvious, place to start is to look at the various processes already in operation – which are summarised as 'Tools for Guiding Landscape Change' in Box 5 on page 23 of *Scotland's future landscapes*. These include designations, regulatory controls and incentives. Despite all these existing processes, however, the recognition and priority given to landscape interests could be better.

Existing processes could be used in new and helpful ways. To give just one example: better-designed rural housing could perhaps be encouraged by an incentive system to address the cost differentials between a well-designed house using appropriate, high-quality materials and a standard 'kit-bungalow', and also perhaps by providing support for the regeneration of relevant local industries such as slate quarrying.

Attitudes to the use of designations are currently in a state of flux, especially in view of the expected effects of climate change on habitats and landscapes, and the difficulties associated with overly inflexible directives. And a protectionist attitude to landscape would in any case be inappropriate since many changes may be for the better. Nevertheless, the state of the mechanisms available for guiding change in our landscapes is unsatisfactory at present, and a different type of designation may be required.

Another possible, and obvious, place to look is at the European Landscape Convention. Although this might appear at first sight to be the ultimate broad-brush, framework document, it is possible that it might provide the sort of underpinning support that is necessary for Scotland, and the rest of the UK, to set up appropriate structures with the powers to take the landscape agenda usefully forward. Although Scotland, and the UK, do in fact already operate many of the systems advocated in the Convention, it contains other important recommendations which we currently operate either poorly or not at all, especially in the area of education.

And perhaps our recent experience in Scotland on the development of land reform and access legislation could provide a useful model of an appropriate way forward, involving the setting up of a Landscape Forum, equivalent to the Access Forum, as part of the process. And other potentially relevant processes across Europe should also be explored.

In any case, what appears to be needed is a way of giving power to a system of debating, agreeing, guiding and orchestrating appropriate change in the landscape which is not prescriptive, or overly restrictive, but which is nevertheless effective and carries the force of national and international agreement. I hope and expect that today's discussions will form the beginning of a process of reaching this goal, and I look forward very much to taking part in them.

## SCOTLAND'S FUTURE LANDSCAPES? THE RESPONSE TO SNH'S DISCUSSION PAPER

*Simon Brooks (SNH National Strategy Officer)*

SNH issued its discussion paper last November, targeted at a general but knowledgeable audience. Over 5000 paper copies were distributed, in addition to placing it on the SNH web site. We received 228 responses from a range of interests from across the nation, many thoughtful and of a high quality, of which one third were from individuals. This is a reassuring response, although we would have welcomed more from those representing community councils, urban interests (including the central belt local authorities), and economic development interests.

Overall there was much support for most of the paper's content, with an endorsement of SNH's initiative in producing the paper, and almost unanimous agreement for the need for better landscape care. Our intention was to inform and provoke debate rather than propose a set of solutions to resolve all the issues raised, as it was recognised that the paper would only be the first step in developing a common approach to Scotland's landscape amongst key interests. In the short term, responses would contribute to the preparation of SNH's landscape policy statement. This paper provides an overview and flavour of the main messages taken from these responses.

**Importance of landscape to the nation** - Without a common understanding and agreement on whether and why the landscape is important it is difficult to debate what our approach to it should be, so the discussion paper sought to clarify what is encompassed by the term landscape, the values people can attribute to it and why it is considered important. Responses expressed strong support for an encompassing approach to landscape that included both the natural and cultural heritage, the rural as well as more urban settings, and recognised the important relationship between people and their surroundings that landscape encapsulates.

Not surprisingly responses agreed that the landscape was important, with many stressing this applies to all landscapes – the urban, degraded or poorer landscapes as well as the special (although several questioned what an 'all landscape' approach means in practice). Many stressed the tangible economic benefits that the landscape provides, its importance for the broader economic and rural development agendas and in particular the reliance of the tourism industry on this resource. But people lie at the heart of any debate about landscape and while recognising these more tangible benefits others cautioned against over-reliance on economic, quantitative or utilitarian arguments to validate the importance of landscape, emphasising instead the more intangible benefits as equally valid.

**A changing landscape** – The discussion paper recognised the intrinsic evolution of Scotland's landscape, and provided an overview of recent forces for change and their landscape consequences. A large number of responses agreed with this analysis, and many offered commentary at a finer grain of detail. But several responses also criticised the analysis for its simplicity, overly negative focus not reflecting improvements in the more urban environment (a common theme from some more urban authorities), and the 50 year timescale as too short. These are valid criticisms, although the paper did not seek to provide a comprehensive review.

Regarding new forces for change, by far the greatest comment was on the consequences of climate change and energy policy, be it enforced changes in land cover and management practices, or society's response through the encouragement of renewables in general, or wind energy in particular. The paper identified eight ways in which the consequences of change were considered to have resulted in a net disadvantage to Scotland, and although

many broadly agreed with these there was criticism again of this as an overly negative analysis that ignored some considerable landscape improvements.

**Addressing the challenges** - The paper's analysis of the challenges facing Scotland's landscape was supported in general. But many criticised its omission of coasts and seascape from the analysis, and considered that the challenge presented by renewable energy, and wind farms in particular was not given enough emphasis. Contrasting views were offered on the adequacy of existing tools and mechanisms to tackle these issues. The planning system was considered by some as central, although its role was considered to be underplayed in the paper. Some recognised that many changes fall outwith its control, while others highlighted its failings and argued for specific measures such as strengthening control and enhancing policy guidance. Concern was expressed with the adequacy of designations (in particular NSAs and Gardens and Designed Landscapes), while new tools such as Strategic Environmental Assessment, are considered to have significant potential.

Some of the head points from comments on the issues facing five landscape settings are presented here to give a flavour of responses received.

- Many highlighted that for the majority of the population it is their **settlement's landscape** that is of vital importance. The role of planning, green belts and green wedges in safeguarding settlement setting was highlighted, together with a concern for the state of greenspace. And whilst the contribution of the built fabric to regional identity was recognised, some expressed caution with simply creating a historical pastiche, calling for new good design where appropriate and greater community involvement.
- For those landscapes considered **degraded**, there is some support for a strategic approach to the issue (such as the work of Central Scotland Forest). But some highlighted the range of values, including cultural, recreational and personal associations that are attached to such landscapes, and cautioned against an approach of blanket enhancement.
- Many comments confirmed the need to ensure agricultural support recognised the public good found in Scotland's **agricultural landscapes**. Several argued strongly for greater recognition and resourcing of the conservation of designed landscapes, given their significant contribution to the rural scene.
- The importance and contribution of our **upland landscapes** to Scotland as a whole was highlighted, with deer, tracks and renewables identified as key issues. Many called for greater recognition of and stronger protection for the uplands, and especially the wilder and remoter landscapes.
- The discussion paper recognised the more sensitive approach to forestry that is now renewing our **wooded landscapes**, but we received contrasting views on the extent to which improvements are having real affect on the ground. Some support was expressed for a more planned approach to woodland expansion, perhaps using existing mechanisms such as IFS and Local Forest Frameworks, while several responses highlighted the relevance of the then on-going review of Forestry Commission Scotland managed land.

**Achieving greater care for Scotland's landscape** – From responses to questions exploring how we might achieve greater landscape care, six themes can be identified.

- **Greater understanding** and **enhanced awareness** amongst professionals and the public of the landscape, its value and the issues affecting it.

- **Clear leadership** for the landscape interest. While a few see this as a role for the Scottish Executive, many identified the need for SNH to provide leadership, backed up with appropriate skills, strengthened mechanisms (and sometimes greater powers for SNH), and adequate resources.
- Better integrated and more **partnership working** to break down the sectoral approach of institutions to the landscape, with a broad and encompassing approach that recognises the range of landscape values (natural – cultural – aesthetic – etc).
- More engagement with the **breadth of interests**, particularly local authorities and communities.
- Promotion of a **vision for Scotland's landscape** and/or the development of some form of national landscape strategy.
- Ensuring the necessary **landscape skills** are available and supported with adequate resources.

**A shared agenda?** – On the suggestion that a shared agenda is required, responses did not underestimate the challenge of developing this, which supports and reinforces the need for wide debate about Scotland's landscapes. Many responses wanted to engage in further debate which is encouraging. But while many supported a lead role for SNH in this, others criticised SNH as being weak in its defence of landscape, under undue political influence, and lacking the necessary powers. Some also questioned whether SNH had the necessary skills (regarding design and cultural interests), and resources to adequately take a leadership role. All this suggests a need for SNH to clarify its landscape role and consider where renewed effort is required.

Some suggested the establishment of a national landscape forum to achieve a shared agenda, with some drawing parallels with the Access Forum and the Built Environment Forum. Ideas for local landscape fora and strategies were also floated, although some acknowledged that any approach must first consider adapting existing mechanisms to better incorporate the landscape interest. While the focus of any forum is less than clear, some suggested the preparation of a vision statement for Scotland's landscape, others some form of national landscape strategy. It was noted that the work of any Forum should be guided by the European Landscape Convention.

This quick review of responses to our discussion paper only touches on the considerable detail contained in many. All of this will be drawn upon as SNH develops not only its landscape policy, but also promotes the wider landscape debate that this consultation has revealed support for. And once again, on behalf of SNH, can I thank you all for your contributions.

## SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP 1 - SCOTLAND'S LANDSCAPE AGENDA

The morning workshop explored the issues facing Scotland's landscape and sought confirmation that there is a landscape agenda requiring attention. Two questions were posed.

1. *What are the issues facing Scotland's landscape that need to be tackled as a priority?* Each group was asked to identify their 'top five' issues.
2. *For each of the 'top five' issues, what actions are required to address these, and by whom?* Each group was asked to consider what they would wish to see others doing, as well as what their own organisation can contribute.

Issues Identified	Actions Suggested
<b>Issues evident in the physical landscape</b>	
<b>Climate change</b> – unpredictable consequences, but provides opportunity to create new landscapes as we are forced to adapt (e.g. dynamic flood plains and riparian woodland).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to predict landscape consequences, and monitor future change.</li> </ul>
<b>Renewable energy</b> – the proliferation and size (height and extent) of wind farms; possible implication of new marine technologies; requirement for new or upgraded transmission grid and pylons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address lack of a national framework.</li> <li>• Policy and its application should better balance landscape with economic and social considerations (ie. promote a 'sustainable development' framework).</li> </ul>
<b>Built development</b> – lack of control in urban/rural areas; cumulative effects; poor design; poor integration of roads, greenspaces and urban/rural fringe; increasing street lighting in rural areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better planning skills.</li> <li>• Apply appropriate standards.</li> </ul>
<b>Roadside development</b> – clutter of signage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refreshed guidance and action plans to remove/consolidate signage clutter.</li> <li>• Greater recognition of importance of views from the road.</li> <li>• Audit signage requirements of trunk road management contracts.</li> </ul>
<b>Rural/agricultural landscapes</b> – no incentive for landscape management (highlighted by non-profitability of most forestry and farming); concern with controls over afforestation; new forms of agriculture (e.g. poly-tunnels, and diversification); reform of existing support creating uncertainty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated land management is required (utilise land management contracts and single farm payments).</li> <li>• CAP reform provides new opportunities for landscape management.</li> <li>• Better information on complementary grant schemes (perhaps a combined RSS and SFGS grant).</li> </ul>
<b>Threats to designed landscapes</b> – limited support for non-inventory sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support a wider range of designed landscapes and their better management.</li> </ul>
<b>Threats to wild land</b> - from hill tracks, hydro power, wind farms, telecomms, and roads.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stronger safeguards</li> <li>• Re-instatement/encouragement of natural processes – an opportunity</li> <li>• Control of over-grazing - the restoration of ecologically degraded landscapes</li> </ul>
<b>Coastal landscapes</b> – more development on previously undeveloped coasts, especially those most accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better understanding of scale/rate of change</li> <li>• Better application of NPPG13 policy on coastal development.</li> </ul>

<b><i>Issues arising from the approach and process applied</i></b>	
<b>Need to link mechanisms and processes better</b> – need to get landscape on the political agenda, and improve its legislative framework; we need to better recognise, assess and consider the landscape consequences of our decisions, especially when these are indirect (e.g. energy use, minerals use).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the framework promoted by the European Landscape Convention.</li> <li>• Link landscape to social and economic agendas/policies (utilise the 3 pillars of sustainability, and ‘Quality of Life’ approaches).</li> <li>• Improve integration/cohesion of Government agency interests in landscape.</li> <li>• Develop a landscape strategy and a means to deliver it – LCA, community planning, landscape protection and designations. Facilitated (or led?) by Executive and/or SNH, but involve local groups/communities.</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape awareness and appreciation</b> – poor understanding/agreement about what ‘landscape’ is (not just scenery), what it means to people, the value people attach to landscape, and recognising the economic and social value of landscape; lack of informed awareness of the consequences for the landscape of our actions, and the inability or unwillingness of people to fully connect their actions with landscape effects (at all ages).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage community opportunities for engagement with their landscape.</li> <li>• Careful use of language to promote understanding.</li> <li>• Clear exposition of the historical component in the landscape and its relationship to design.</li> <li>• More resources and training in landscape, design, management issues (at local and national levels).</li> </ul>
<b>Poor landscape skills and low landscape standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better training.</li> <li>• Make links between research, theory, guidance and practice.</li> </ul>
<b>Provide a mechanism for resolving conflicting objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the balance in decision-making.</li> <li>• Identify landscape capacity for change to guide decisions.</li> <li>• Improve the quality of the EIA process.</li> </ul>
<b>Lack of vision and boldness</b> – landscape deserves a more visionary approach, both about the landscapes we have inherited and those we need to create in order to meet emerging needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design a process for creating landscape visions.</li> </ul>

Some common themes to many of the issues and actions identified above included the following.

- National and local landscape designation – they need to be refreshed to enhance their safeguard, and develop a modern approach that recognises their role in a landscape wide approach.
- Legislation – a refreshed approach to landscape is required (perhaps building on the European Landscape Convention), signalling the nations commitment to our landscape as well as establishing a means to achieve landscape objectives.
- Integration - across the range of interests affecting the landscape, and using policies and strategies to achieve this.
- Leadership – to lead and demonstrate commitment to the landscape.

## ADVOCATING LANDSCAPE POLICY IN IRELAND - A 10 YEAR ODYSSEY

*Terry O'Regan (Landscape Alliance Ireland)*

I would like to thank SNH for their invitation to participate in this important seminar. I am very conscious of the possibility that what I have to say might be seen as an intrusion from outside and I would like to stress that I am here to share my experiences with you, in the hope that they may assist you in the process of advancing landscape policy in Scotland.

*The Richness of our living is influenced to a considerable extent by the diversity of the resources of the place we call home. An understanding and appreciation of the nature of this diversity can lead to an enrichment of living.*

*This land...is, in the last analysis, our one, our ultimate resource. For eight thousand years now it has supported human communities, producing food to nourish, materials to shelter and clothe: a place to call home. The landscape... itself is a rich tapestry recording the interplay over these eight thousand years of its natural heritage and human progress.<sup>6</sup>*

Our landscape is indeed wrapped around our living, surely it deserves an appropriate and effective policy.

You could say that I am not quite an outsider, as whilst my physical experience of Scotland has been limited to visiting the Garden Festival in Glasgow some years ago, Scotland would have been a cultural influence in my life for many years. I believe that our conscious awareness of landscape is established quite early in life and growing up in Ireland in the 1950's and early 60's we acquired images of Scotland through the songs of Kenneth McKellar and Moira Anderson, the music of Jimmy Shand and his band, the legend of the Lough Ness monster and many books such as Rob Roy and Greyfriars Bobby. My father was instrumental in founding the Waterford Festival of Light Opera and the imaginary landscape of 'Brigadoon' was therefore also a formative influence. For those too old for that reference, might I suggest the image of the 'Monarch of the Glen' set to music!

On a more serious level, very early on in my ten year odyssey in pursuit of landscape policy, I was presented with a book *Design with Nature* written by the late Ian McHarg, an eminent Glaswegian who emigrated to the USA.

*Our eyes do not divide us from the world, but unite us with it. Let this be known to be true. Let us then abandon the simplicity of separation and give unity its due. Let us abandon the self-mutilation which has been our way and give expression to the potential harmony of man-nature. The world is abundant, we require only a deference born of understanding to fulfil man's promise. He must become the steward of the biosphere. To do this he must design with nature.<sup>7</sup>*

This book is as fresh today as when it was originally written back in the 1970's in describing how we might successfully integrate development in a natural landscape.

My own background as a gardener, who went on to study horticulture and subsequently worked as a landscape contractor and now as landscape designer and environmental consultant, was in retrospect an appropriate preparation for adopting a holistic view of landscape and for arguing the case for a national landscape policy. My initial call for a landscape policy back in 1992 was no grand strategy; at the time it was simply a possible answer to a lifetimes frustration, not so much at the re-invention of the landscaping wheel, as the apparent need to continuously repair the wheel. My suggestion of a landscape policy

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<sup>6</sup> *Laois – An Environmental History*, John Feehan

<sup>7</sup> *Design with Nature*, Ian L. McHarg. 1971

was more directed at the landscaping industry and was intended to improve the treatment of the soil and plants on landscaping sites.

However my suggestion for a landscape policy provoked a much wider reaction than I had anticipated and it was rather like opening up the curtains in the cinemas long ago for the cinemascope film following the more limited image of the short film(s), which preceded the main feature. I rapidly moved to a much wider holistic understanding of landscape; in doing so, I met and worked with people who had specific agendas of their own, each finding common ground in the landscape. This led to the foundation of Landscape Alliance Ireland and over the past ten years, we have engaged in persistent lobbying at government level, worked with various other disciplines and organisations and participated at a European level, particularly with The Council of Europe with regard to the development of the European Landscape Convention.

Early on, I found that one had to draw on a wide range of tools to explain and advance the case for landscape policy and I have drawn on poets and writers world wide, whose writings clearly articulate the close relationship between the human race and their landscape. For the purposes of this paper I looked to our Scottish and Irish poets.

*Landscape and I get on together well.  
Though I'm the talkative one, still he can tell  
His symptoms of being to me, the way a shell  
Murmurs of oceans.*

Norman MacCaig - Landscape And I

*The old farmer, nearing death, asked  
To be carried outside and set down  
Where he could see a certain field  
'And then I will cry my heart out,' he said.*

*It troubles me, thinking about that man;  
What shape was the field of his crying  
In Donegal?"*

W.R. Rodgers - Field Day

*Scotland small? Our multiform, our infinite Scotland small?  
Only as a patch of hillside may be a cliché corner  
To a fool who cries 'Nothing but heather!' where in  
September another  
Sitting there and resting and gazing round  
Sees not only heather but blueberries...*

*.....  
Nothing but heather! – How marvellously descriptive! And  
incomplete!*

Hugh MacDiarmid - Scotland Small?

*Here in the Uplands  
The soil is ungrateful;  
The fields, red and sorrel,  
Are stony and bare.  
A few trees, wind-twisted –  
Or are they but bushes? –  
Stand stubbornly guarding  
A home here and there.*

Sir Alexander Gray - Scotland

*O stony grey soil of Monaghan  
The laugh from my love you thieved;  
You took the gay child of my passion  
And gave me your clod-conceived.*

*You clogged the feet of my boyhood  
And I believed that my stumble  
Had the poise and stride of Apollo  
And his voice my thick-tongued mumble.*

*You told me the plough was immortal!  
O green-life-conquering plough!*

Patrick Kavanagh - Stony Grey Soil

*The names of a land show the heart of the race;  
they move on the tongue like a lilt of a song.  
You say the name and I see the place –  
Drumbo, Dungannon, Annalong.  
Barony, townland, we cannot go wrong.*

John Hewitt - Ulster Names

Poets link landscape to our day-to-day lives with apparent ease. When you stand back from the immediate landscape issues and take the long view, you should also find it quite easy to link the broader environmental, social, economic, health and even spiritual problems with poor or diminished landscape quality.

I have endeavoured to find comfortable ways of explaining how it is possible to have a quality landscape everywhere and not just in areas of sublime beauty - the ubiquitous chocolate box scenery. One image I have used is that of the **landscape cake** where you have many diverse ingredients making up the landscapes of the world, but yet there are common ingredients to all landscapes and it is the smaller, spicy non-universal ingredients that often add the sense of local distinctiveness and identity.

I have also used the **landscape bar chart concept** where you break down and quantify the various ingredients that make up the landscape in the form of a bar chart. Obviously in the rural landscape you would be high on the green (natural) section, whereas in the urban landscape you would be high on the grey (built) section, but a successful urban landscape should still contain a reasonable balance between the grey and the green and curiously enough in the rural cultural landscape the same can be said, but in inverse proportions. I would argue that you should establish a minimum or threshold level and a desirable or target level for each section. The planning process would then operate within these limits. For example you could establish the maximum/minimum tree population or canopy cover per unit area in each land-use category.

However all this leaves aside the concept of the composition of the elements of the landscape as in painting a landscape scene and this brought me to the image of the **landscape orchestra** with all the players in the landscape, contributing in various ways to creating a satisfactory and melodious landscape. I appreciate that there is the possibility that a discordant landscape may still be a successful landscape. It is difficult however for an orchestra to produce an enjoyable melody without a score and this brings us back to the question of landscape policy.

If you have a carefully considered, fully integrated **landscape policy**, you have the score for the landscape equivalent of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Ideally the government should be the conductor. They might delegate this duty but should be required to have active participation in selecting and refining the programme. Bodies such as Scottish Natural Heritage should have a key role in the formulation and implementation of the policy. Their

work to date in pursuit of Landscape Policy has been of an exceptional quality, demonstrating a very clear understanding of the issues, the challenges and the prospective solutions.

I suspect that most governments do not understand what having a policy involves. I have given much thought to this phenomenon. I believe that they regularly confuse policy with its constituent elements – the issues, the aims/objectives, the implementation strategy and the instruments employed. In Ireland we have in fact had a disjointed, non-integrated, piecemeal landscape policy for many years. We therefore have occasional very short bursts of landscape music.

Landscape policy is more likely to produce a more considered response to current forces for change in the landscape such as wind farms. The present situation in Ireland and apparently in Scotland is akin to fighting the good battle, valley by valley or glen by glen, in lonely and isolated corners of the big picture. Could it be that we do not yet have the necessary sense of vision for the big canvas.

In my humble attempts to take on the big canvas I have used the concept of **landscape recycling**, as distinct perhaps from, or as an extension of landscape character assessment to place the emphasis on landscape evolution and in this regard I would suggest that every landscape is a process rather than a product as such, each landscape being on an evolutionary track. Severe interventions can change the direction of the evolution quite dramatically, but in many cases landscapes evolve at a relatively slow rate. In either case we are actively recycling our landscape. Nature has always recycled landscape also. Sometimes we work in partnership with nature, increasingly however we appear to be running on a separate, aggressively competitive, landscape evolutionary track network. Established landscapes tend to have an obvious logic and I speak of the logic of landscape being disrupted by certain interventions. An obvious case of this would be the construction of a dam to create a reservoir, where the logic of the existing landscape literally disappears with roads ending in a lake and fields cut in half. The construction of motorways, tend to have a similar impact.

At its simplest the strategy of **Landscape Alliance Ireland** was to get landscape on the agenda and keep it there. It was our aim that all related legislation should be '**landscape proofed**'. We doggedly persisted in lobbying at governmental level for landscape policy and also to have Ireland sign and ratify the European landscape convention. We succeeded in the latter, when the government, possibly out of frustration at our activity decided to sign and ratify the convention. However it is more likely that they considered that we largely had all of the pieces in place to comply with the convention. I am not convinced that this is the case, but then it would be up to all those committed to landscape quality to point out the inadequacies.

To date we have failed to convince government with regard to a fully scored landscape policy. The reason for this, I suspect, is that governments are increasingly slow to make firm commitments that may compromise their freedom of action in the future. I see this as a lack of character at government level, which is not unique to Ireland. Commitments made to heritage, and to other quality of life aspects, tend very often to be aspirational, whilst commitments to economic elements tend to be quite firm and defined.

This 'woolly' approach contributes I believe to a progressive erosion of landscape/ heritage quality as it makes it all too easy to justify trading off such important aspects of life quality for perceived gains in economic terms, which often only benefit the few. We will therefore, in Landscape Alliance Ireland continue to argue the case for landscape policy at a national level, as that is the only way that we will ensure that landscape is provided for at national legislative level.

In our campaign, we adopted a wide range of strategies - the principle measure being the convening of the **national landscape forum** on seven occasions over the past ten years bringing together many of the players at official and community level in the one forum to discuss landscape in a very integrated holistic framework. We have published the proceedings of quite a number of these gatherings, and would hope ultimately to publish all of the proceedings and to continue convening the forum, if resources and energy permits.

On a separate level we have carried out surveys and worked with many different organisations to encourage an awareness of landscape as a unifying framework for environmental heritage and social concerns. Our website, though not as regularly updated as I would wish, has provided a useful tool in this process and in recent years we have engaged in a number of European research projects and would hope to further develop this side of the organisation.

We have been involved in the development of the European Landscape Convention since 1995 and next year will mark an important milestone for Landscape Alliance Ireland when Cork will host a Council of Europe ELC Workshop as part of the European City of Culture Programme. To achieve this we have forged a unique partnership with national, regional and local government, the Heritage Council and Horticulture Development Board.

It is difficult to gauge our achievements over the ten years, but I do believe that we have contributed greatly in raising the profile and recognition of the importance of landscape quality. The network of people that we have brought together has strengthened our case, realised its own achievements and ensured that we are more likely to be listened to today than at the beginning. The European partnerships are extremely valuable as we can demonstrate that the problems and solutions are universal rather than local.

We will have to acknowledge some disappointment at the fact that a very blinkered understanding of landscape is still all too prevalent in Ireland with the majority of the decision makers only seeing it as a tourism resource to be exploited, rather than cherished as a core dimension of the quality of life.

*There is a stream, I name not its name, lest inquisitive tourist  
Hunt it, and make it a lion, and get it at last into guide-books,*

Arthur Hugh Clough - from *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*

I have become increasingly concerned at the close association between landscape and tourism and would argue that an excessive emphasis on the exploitation of landscape as a tourism resource is almost certainly likely to contribute to a deterioration of landscape quality and ultimately to the loss of landscape as a tourism resource. The primary objective should be to ensure that our landscape is of the highest quality and that it is a living, dynamic, cherished landscape for the local population. If we succeed in this objective we will always have tourists but they will be tourists coming to experience a real, rather than a contrived landscape.

We are going through what I would call a 'national rite of passage' in Ireland at present. Certain negative actions by Government with regard to heritage would infer an attitude of "we tried heritage and it did not work!". Heritage is seen largely as an obstacle rather than a resource. If the current negative phase generates a debate, however bruising and painful, that leaves us assured and mature in our relationship with our heritage, we will be the better for it.

In conclusion I would suggest that as Scotland moves towards the possibility of a landscape policy, the objective should be to ensure that the policy is active and effective from the top down and the bottom up and that there is an integrated meeting of minds in this regard in the middle ground.

It is important to recognise that it will not be adequate just to have people skilled in landscape active in the implementation of a landscape policy. Measures must be put in place to develop an informed awareness of what contributes to landscape quality and what damages landscape quality at all levels of society. This observation is made in recognition of the fact that positive or negative impacts arise very often as the cumulative impact of many small actions.

I cannot stress too greatly the need to make the connections with the actors at the landscape coalface. I like the saying that 'The only man who knows where he is going, is the man pushing the wheelbarrow': in the context of landscape change, I suggest that you might substitute bulldozer for wheelbarrow.

I wish you well in your work not alone for your own sake but also for the fact that it will assist our activities in Ireland, if we are in a position to refer to proactive measures being taken with regard to landscape management throughout Europe.

*It is not a choice of either the city or the countryside: both are essential, but today it is nature, beleaguered in the country, too scarce in the city which has become precious...<sup>8</sup>*

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<sup>8</sup> *Design with Nature*, Ian L. McHarg. 1971

## BUILDING A PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR SCOTLAND'S LANDSCAPES – SOME THOUGHTS

*John Thomson (SNH Director Strategy and Operations - West)*

Responses to SNH's discussion paper have revealed widespread agreement on the value placed upon Scotland's landscapes, and the pressures and challenges that they face. There is also acceptance that a more active approach to guiding change in our landscapes is now required, recognising the shared responsibility we all have for this resource. And encouragingly, there is a strong willingness to contribute and be involved in this debate about Scotland's landscapes. SNH believes that now is an opportune time to promote an agenda of action for Scotland's landscapes, for a number of reasons.

**Relevance to current political priorities** - We can make strong links with various strands of the Executive's policy agenda set out in its Partnership Agreement – economic and social as well as environmental. These include:

- 'place competitiveness' – Scotland's image and branding;
- sustainable development – the landscape dimension of Strategic Environmental Assessment;
- integrated rural development – landscape as the basis for a diversified rural economy;
- health – accessible 'green gyms'; and
- social inclusion and environmental justice – good quality surroundings for all.

**The European Landscape Convention** - The Government is currently deliberating on whether to ratify the ELC. This is a Council of Europe initiative, not an EU Directive. It applies to all landscapes and is thus not just a traditional designation-based approach. Its aim is the promotion of landscape protection, management and planning, with the concerns of people and communities central to its working. It will strive to do this by raising awareness, promoting training and education, undertaking landscape assessment, establishing 'quality objectives' for the landscape, and encouraging European co-operation and promoting a Landscape Award. Much of this reflects UK thinking and practice, a result of our important contribution to its drafting. And Scotland can be said to fulfil many of its requirements already, with the important exception of the status of National Scenic Areas.

**Policies in flux** – Several established policies with major implications for the state of Scotland's landscapes are currently in a state of flux. These include:

- CAP reform and the move to integrated rural development, including Land Management Contracts;
- stronger moves to multi-purpose forestry, signalled in the Scottish Forestry Strategy;
- a focus on the better management of the marine and coastal environment;
- renewed attention to urban greenspace and peri-urban areas;
- the introduction of a right of responsible access under the Land Reform Act;
- refreshing the planning system (National Planning Framework, City Region Plans and National Park Plans); and
- decentralisation/empowerment of communities, through community planning and 'Rural Futures' work.

The fact that these policies are in the melting-pot creates a great opportunity to put in place new ones more sympathetic to landscape objectives. But we must seize it whilst it lasts.

**Completing Scotland's environmental policy framework** – The Scottish Executive and Parliament have brought forward a raft of measures concerned with the environment, including:

- the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000, and the establishment of two Parks;
- the Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003, implementing measures in fulfilment of the Water Framework Directive;
- the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, introducing a responsible right of access;
- the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, and a Scottish Biodiversity Strategy;
- future legislation for Strategic Environmental Assessment; and
- an impending strategy for the marine environment.

Landscape is the missing piece of the jigsaw, requiring attention if we are to complete the refreshment of Scotland's natural heritage policies.

**Possible actions for a landscape agenda** – What might a credible programme of action for Scotland's landscapes contain? It could perhaps be broken down into three categories: process changes, policy changes and legislative action.

Process changes might include:

- a National Landscape Forum;
- a national framework (vision and programme of action for implementing ELC);
- training and CPD to raise awareness; and
- build NGO and community capacity (e.g. through community planning guidance).

Policy changes that could contribute include:

- guidance and funding to encourage the positive management of National Scenic Areas;
- provide a steer to National Parks and Regional Parks to address landscape issues;
- publish guidance on local landscape designations;
- refresh planning guidance;
- further development of the Scottish Executive's design agenda, with a view to promoting local design initiatives;
- integrate landscape objectives into Land Management Contracts;
- ensure coastal landscape objectives are reflected in marine/coastal planning;
- incorporate landscape in the sustainable development agenda (with indicators); and
- ensure it is addressed in Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Legislative measures – perhaps introduced through the proposed Planning Bill, or a separate Landscape Act - could include:

- a statutory basis for National Scenic Areas;
- a requirement for local authorities to produce landscape strategies; and a
- a refreshed landscape duty to complement the biodiversity duty.

**How can we progress a landscape agenda?** – If we are to successfully promote a landscape agenda on these lines we must tackle and overcome a number of obstacles, most of them essentially perceptual. These include the perceptions that there is a lack of public interest in the landscape, that landscape objectives conflict with other public policy objectives (e.g. renewables, aquaculture), that landscape is an elitist concern and that landscape is a very complex or subjective subject which is difficult to address. These difficulties are compounded by the absence of a clear lead body tackling the issue (the corollary of shared responsibility).

If we are to succeed we must demonstrate that these views are misconceived and build momentum. Thus we shall need to reveal the extent of public interest in the landscape and to show landscape to be relevant to a number of wider agendas. We shall need to demonstrate the compatibility between our aspirations and other policy objectives (provided that change in the landscape is managed). And we should ensure that we underline Scotland's achievements so far, and stress the need to work together.

One means by which we could seek to address some of these challenges is through some form of National Landscape Forum. This is an idea suggested by several interests in their responses to our discussion paper. But do we need a Forum, or are there alternative and better ways of promoting action? And if we need one, who should lead the process, who should be its members, what is the job to be done, and how should it engage with the wider range of interests that have an interest in its work but will not be members? All these questions deserve careful consideration before we make the leap to setting one up.

## WORKSHOP 2 - TAKING FORWARD THE LANDSCAPE AGENDA – SUMMARY

The afternoon workshop explored how a landscape agenda could be taken forward. Workshop attendees were first asked:

3. *How can we promote landscape interests in a positive way, to ensure it gets adequate attention at both the national and local level?* Each group was asked to identify five actions and who they consider might take the lead in delivering these.

Action to promote landscape with a local focus	Action to promote landscape with a national focus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Education</b> - promote school competitions to enhance landscape awareness (promote through Ranger Services and voluntary education), and encourage awards (e.g. John Muir Trust award). Educate farmers/land managers through agricultural colleges.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Education</b> – include landscape in the curriculum at primary and secondary level, and support direct learning experiences for children (eg. require a week long outdoor experience).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The ‘everyday’</b> - promote awareness of value(s) of everyday local landscapes and the practices that shape them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Media</b> - use television e.g. Votes for a landscape (cf. BBC’s Restoration programme). Establish a website and chatroom.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>People focus and participation</b> – engage with individuals/communities locally on issues with consequences for landscape change. Develop local landscape plans and village design statements. Promote enjoyment of the landscape.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Political</b> - generate active political debate to overcome the Executive’s inertia (e.g. use Parliament’s committee system). Ensure landscape legislation (placing a ‘duty of care’ on public bodies), is part of the next Partnership agreement.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Positive messages</b> - promote the idea that your local landscape is an asset that you maintain and invest in, just like your house/farm/ city. Landscape is about ‘quality of life’ issues.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Positive messages</b> – a landscape concern is not just about saying no. Promote positive messages and solutions e.g. landscape supports economic development, inward investment, community development. The European Landscape Convention approach recognises this.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Partnerships</b> – make common cause with local authorities, communities and NGOs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Partnerships</b> – make common cause with agencies and NGOs</li> </ul>

Workshops also identified several general difficulties to be overcome in promoting landscape.

- There is a perception of elitism – landscapes for the people who live there, and only special landscapes.
- Popularise landscape – take an inclusive approach to landscape and express messages in simple ways (avoid buzzwords). The vocabulary we use is important – perhaps we need to talk about ‘place’, rather than landscape.
- Recognise that there are few ‘quick wins’, and progress will take time!

The final workshop question asked the following.

4. *Is a national landscape forum, or some other form of working group required, to provide a focus for all our landscape efforts?* Each group was asked to consider the purpose of such a body, how it should operate and who should be represented on it.

#### **Comments on the need for a Forum**

- It is essential to first clarify the objective(s) of any Forum – what is it for – and establish a timescale for delivery. Some considered SNH's role as a statutory adviser provides a locus for SNH to 'get on with it' and advise the Executive without a Forum.
- A large number of participants conditionally supported the idea of a Forum. Some comments identified why a Forum is considered necessary:
  - to provide focus for debate;
  - to bring agencies together;
  - to bring NGOs and small organisations together to share views;
  - to channel views to Ministers;
  - to produce consensus for action; and
  - to ensure implementation of European Landscape Convention.
- Participants also highlighted some dangers of establishing a Forum, some suggesting that it needed to be approached cautiously. Dangers included:
  - the daunting scope of what is encompassed by 'landscape' (emphasising the need for a focused brief);
  - a landscape Forum could 'isolate' landscape rather than integrate;
  - it will compete for time/attention and resources with other Fora; and
  - the danger of it becoming a talking shop, without a focus on action/doing.

#### **What will it do – what are its objectives?**

- Be prepared to set the agenda, but adapt this as necessary over time. Any agenda needs to make a difference, such as pushing new legislation.
- Focus on the European Landscape Convention, such as establishing the Convention's implications for, and application to, Scotland.
- To prepare a 'National Landscape Strategy'/strategic framework (cf. biodiversity strategy), that can influence and inform other national plans and policies.
- To prepare advice on the better management of the landscape, and provide praise for best practice.

#### **Membership and Organisation**

- It is important to learn from other models, such as the National Access Forum, Moorland Forum, Built Environment Forum Scotland, Scottish Biodiversity Forum, and Scottish Ecological Design Association (SEDA). Some of these are established 'within' Government, some are at arms length or separate from Government. Any Forum would require:
  - adequate resources – some suggested from the Scottish Executive rather than SNH;
  - good will and agreement amongst those to be involved, with the hope that a Forum will establish its own momentum; and
  - clear objectives and a timescale for delivery.
- Who should lead a Forum? 'Facilitation' rather than leadership was suggested (though some questioned what this meant), but who should provide this?:
  - the Scottish Executive – though they could also be the target of advice prepared by the Forum;
  - SNH – but some questioned the extent of its urban interest;

- o Historic Scotland – though some also questioned the scope of its remit;
  - o CoSLA – recognising the key local authority role; or
  - o a non-governmental organisation/voluntary body.
- A Forum requires a broad and inclusive membership to avoid becoming a ‘silo’, but size was recognised as an issue. Views suggested it needed independent members, and balanced membership including:
  - o the community perspective (perhaps through the Scottish Association of Community Councils?);
  - o local government;
  - o businesses in the community;
  - o landowners;
  - o tourism interests (agency and commercial);
  - o biodiversity interests; and
  - o amenity societies (Civic trust).
- The running of a Forum should use sub-groups, and co-opt expertise in where required.

## PLENARY DISCUSSION AND NEXT STEPS

For the plenary discussion John Thomson and Patricia Macdonald joined the Chair.

- *It was noted that the seminar had not addressed the question of what the vision for Scotland's landscape should be – we do not know where we are going.* In reply it was suggested that establishing a vision could be the task of any Forum that is established, although a lot of effort would be required with communities to articulate what this means at the local level. They also emphasised that a vision should not be a blueprint for the landscape.
- *SNH was asked what they would take out of the seminar's discussion?* In reply it was noted that the seminar was part of the process required to raise understanding of, and bring attention to, landscape issues. Encouragingly, they were signs that the Executive were also beginning to look at the landscape issues being raised by such discussion.
- *An appeal to clarify the purpose of a national landscape forum was made.* In reply the need for a Forum to have a clear agenda was acknowledged, although this should not be so constrained as not to allow for its revision over time. Any Forum should not be just a talking shop, and the European Landscape Convention provides a useful focus for its work.
- *In recognition of the workshop's discussion about wind farms and the landscape, should the Executive not produce a strategy for their development?* SNH noted that it had produced its *Strategic locational guidance for on-shore wind farms with respect to the natural heritage* in 2002, and there was increasing recognition from many interests of the need now for some further action by the Scottish Executive to plan better for the huge current interest in wind farm development.
- *The point was made welcoming discussion of the need to enhance landscapes, not just to protect and safeguard the most special.*

**John Thomson (SNH)** concluded the discussion with the following points.

- The discussion and debate amongst the broad range of interests at the seminar confirmed the strong and passionate interest in Scotland's landscape.
- There are new opportunities to address the landscape and the many issues its faces in a more integrated manner with the emergence of 'place-based' agendas rather than simply tackling sectoral agendas.
- There is a challenge for the Scottish Executive to pick up (if not lead) a landscape agenda, as without their interest and support it will be difficult to make much progress.
- Debate has suggested that there is an appetite for some form of Forum, but it would require a clear purpose and agenda.
- SNH will look to meet with the Scottish Executive to feedback the results of the seminar and to discuss how best to take this debate forward into more practical action.

## ANNEX A - LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Name</b>
Aberdeen Council	Ian Nicol
Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland	Charles Strang
Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland	David Rice
Avich & Kilchrenan Community Council	Christine Metcalfe
Avich & Kilchrenan Community Council	Marilyn Henderson
Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan Committee	Toby Wilson
BEAR Scotland	James T Colville
British Deer Society	Mr. H R Rose
British Geological Survey	Dr Martin Smith
Cairngorms Campaign/LINK	Bill Wright
Cairngorms National Park Authority	Peter Cosgrove
Centre for Environmental History - Stirling University	Mairi Stewart
Council for Scottish Archaeology	Jonathan Wordsworth
Cove and Kilcreggan Community Council	Donald Womack
Crofters Commission	Archie MacNab
Environmental interpreter & Artist-photographer	Dr Patricia Macdonald
Fife Council	Andy Kelly
Forestry & Timber Association	Jamie Farquhar
Forestry Commission Scotland	Maggie Gilvray
Forestry Commission Scotland	Nicholas Shepherd
Friends of Glasgow West	Kate Richard
Friends of Glasgow West	Shona Gibson
Friends of Loch Lomond	George Boyd
Garden History Society	Anne Hardcastle
Glasgow City Council	Morna Henderson
Historic Environment Advisory Council for Scotland	Ian Johnson
Historic Scotland	Dr Lesley Macinnes
Historic Scotland	Sarah Govan
Inverness College	Dr Melanie Smith
John Muir Trust	Will Boyd-Wallis
Kincraig and Vicinity Community Council	Nic Bullivant
Kyle & Carrick Civic Society	Sarah O'Donoghue
Landscape Alliance Ireland	Terry O'Regan
Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority	Janet Swailes
Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority	Sarah Parkinson
Lochaber Enterprise	Scott Dingwall
Macaulay Institute	Professor David Miller
Ministry of Defence - Defence Estates	Ceri Daugherty
Ministry of Defence - Defence Estates	Donald Cook
Ministry of Defence - Defence Estates	Iain B Robertson
Mountaineering Council for Scotland	Mike Newbury
Munro Society	Irvine Butterfield
National Trust for Scotland	John Mayhew
Orkney Islands Council	Richard Welch
Paths for All	Ian Findlay
Perth and Kinross Council	Andy Clegg
Perth and Kinross Council	Esther Rogers-Nicoll
Perth Civic Trust	Roddy Young
Public Art Development Agency	Gerrie van Noord
Ramblers Association Scotland	Ian McCall

Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland	Piers Dixon
Royal Museum of Scotland	Andrea N Smith
Royal Scottish Geographical Society	Dr David Munro
Royal Town Planning Institute in Scotland	Graham U'ren
Rural Scottish Enterprise for Grampian Region	Ian Heywood
Scottish Agricultural College - Ayr Campus	Prof. George Marshal
Scottish Borders Council	Jim Knight
Scottish Borders Enterprise	Neil Ferguson
Scottish Civic Trust	Jane Nelson
Scottish Council for National Parks	John Foster
Scottish Countryside Activities Council	Dorothy Breckenridge
Scottish Executive	Angus Corby
Scottish Executive	Manson Wright
Scottish Natural Heritage	Alan Fay
Scottish Natural Heritage	Fiona Lee
Scottish Natural Heritage	Frances Thin
Scottish Natural Heritage	Jane Clark
Scottish Natural Heritage	John Thomson
Scottish Natural Heritage	Mairi Caughey
Scottish Natural Heritage	Peter Rawcliffe
Scottish Natural Heritage	Rebecca Hughes
Scottish Natural Heritage	Simon Brooks
Scottish Natural Heritage Board Member	Ian Muir
Scottish Natural Heritage Board Member	Isabel Glasgow
Scottish Natural Heritage Board Member	Nick Kempe
Scottish Natural Heritage Board Member	Sue Walker
Scottish Rural Property and Business Association	Michael Taylor
Scottish Water	Doreen Bell
Scottish Wild Land Group	David Jarman
Scottish Youth Hostels Association	Keith G Legge
Skye Windfarm Action Group	John Hodgson
Skye Windfarm Action Group	Judith Hodgson
South Lanarkshire Council	Simon Pilpel
sportScotland	Campbell Gerrard
Stirling Council	Andrew Cassells
Stirling Council	Annie Pollock
Stirling Council	Donald Balsillie
Strathblane Community Council	Philip Graves
Sustrans	Tony Grant
University of Strathclyde	Rory MacLellan
VisitScotland	Neil Black
West Dunbartonshire Council	Fiona Harris
	Alison Grant
	Donald McCalman
	Dr Jean M Scott
	Hugh Hendry
	Thomas Huxley

