



## **Review of the Scottish Forestry Grants Scheme**

### **Report on Feedback from the Consultation on proposed changes to SFGS**

**August 2006**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

1. The following report provides a summary of the Scottish Forestry Grants Scheme (SFGS) Consultation, which sought views on proposed changes to the scheme. The Consultation took place from 24 April to 27 June 2006 and a total of 98 responses were received. It is intended that the final agreed scheme will be introduced in 2007.

2. The SFGS Consultation ran in parallel to the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) consultation which looked at the integration of forestry and other support measures into the Land Management Contract (LMC) system.

## **BACKGROUND**

3. The SFGS was introduced in 2003 as a successor to the Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS) and it is the main mechanism by which the Scottish Executive supports non-state forestry activities. The scheme is administered by FCS and supports a range of woodland creation and management activities, which help to deliver the priorities, set out in the Scottish Forestry strategy (SFS).

4. Changes to SFGS are being proposed to ensure that:

- The grant scheme supports the delivery of the Scottish Rural Development Strategy and the Scottish Forestry Strategy.
- Forestry support measures are consistent with the provisions of the new EU Rural Development Regulation (1698/2005) which will come into force in 2007.
- The forestry support system is capable of being integrated into the Land Management Contracts (LMC) system. Scottish Ministers have indicated a desire to achieve greater integration of the various different land management support schemes run by public bodies.
- The grant scheme is simple to understand, access and administer.

## **PROPOSED NEW SCHEME**

5. The proposed new scheme aims to support the following activities;

- Creation of new woodlands in accordance with national priorities (as set out in the SFS) and local/regional priorities as set out in Indicative Forestry Strategies and other similar strategic frameworks.
- The management of existing woodlands to achieve the standards set out in the UK Forestry Standard.
- Woodland improvement activities which enhance the ability of the woodland to deliver forestry policy priorities.
- Activities, which help to improve the performance and competitiveness of the forestry, sector and forestry related businesses.

Full details on the proposed changes can be found in the paper 'Consultation on proposed changes to SFGS' on our web site [www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland)

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

6. The proposed changes to SFGS were overseen by a Project Steering Group (see Appendix 1) comprising staff from Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS) and Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Development (SEERAD) and representatives of the current Customer Representatives Group.

7. The full Customer Representatives Group, which has representation from a wide range of stakeholders also, considered the proposals.

8. A series of working groups comprised of FCS staff prepared the proposals for discussion and endorsement by the Steering Group and the Customer Representatives Group.

9. In addition to the SFGS Consultation document, a series of 5 public meetings were held throughout Scotland during the Consultation period to explain and seek feedback on the proposals.

10. This Report presents the results from the responses to the Consultation. The Project Steering Group and Customer Representatives Group will consider the results of the Consultation and final agreed proposals will then be incorporated within the Scottish Rural Development Plan submission to the EU in November 2006. It is expected to introduce the new scheme in 2007.

11. FCS will also begin to develop the administrative details of the new scheme such as requirements, format, rules and eligibility criteria for the range of grants through working groups. The working group outputs will be circulated to the Customer Representatives Group for comment and feedback.

## **RESULTS FROM CONSULTATION**

### Level of Response

12. A total of 100 responses were received and a full list of respondents is shown in Appendix 2. Each response was allocated to a specific type of respondent category to help with the analysis. Two of the responses were from FCS employees and although views were noted these were not included in the analysis. The analysis was therefore based on 98 responses – see Table 1.

13. The level of response to the questions was generally high with an average of 76% of respondents replying to the questions. The highest responses were to questions on small woodlands (Q1) Forest Plans (Q 4 and 5) and Forest Environment Payments (Q7). The least responses were received to questions on Community Projects (Q14), Forest Plan rates (Q6) and Creation of other woodlands (Q 2).

**Table 1 – Number and Category**

<b>Category</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
Forest Company/Agent/Manager	29	30
Woodland Owner	9	9
Environmental/Ecological	16	17
Local Authority	18	19
FCS Forestry Forums	3	3
Associations – forestry related	8	9
Other	8	8
Woodland Projects	7	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 2 - Level of Response % by Question**

<b>Question Number</b>	<b>Yes %</b>	<b>No %</b>	<b>Neutral %</b>	<b>No Response %</b>
1	60	24	1	15
2	50	16	2	32
3	28	32	17	23
4	80	2	1	17
5	83	N/A	N/A	17
6	21	25	17 (difficult to answer)	37
7	68	5	7	28
8	72	1	3	24
9	80	N/A	N/A	20
10	57	16	0	27
11	55	17	7	21
12	78	2	0	20
13	76	0	0	24
14	59	2	0	39

Methodology Applied

14. Each response was allocated to a type of respondent category. The consultation was based on 14 questions and the respondents reply to each question was summarised and collated into an Excel spreadsheet.

Main themes were identified. The response for each question was coded by using Yes/No/Neutral/No Response and Comments. Analysis was undertaken on a question by question basis reviewing main points raised.

15. No weighting of opinion has been attempted, as this is highly subjective. Whilst all comments were considered it was only where the same or similar comment was being made by 3 or more respondents that this was identified and recorded as a main comment within the Report.

## Responses to Questions

### Woodland Creation – small woodlands

**Proposal - The small woodland proposal consists of a one-off payment in support of the establishment of small woodlands, with no requirement for prior approval in other than certain designated areas.**

**Q1. Do you agree with the principle that the creation of small woodlands should be supported in this way?**

16. There was overall support for this proposal with 59 (60%) in agreement. 17 (32%) of these respondents highlighted the potential impact on landscape, historic features and conservation interest and 13 (22%) were supportive provided the UK Forestry Standard was met and applicants were issued with good clear guidance eg a mini-handbook.

17. 23(24%) objected to the proposal with strong objections from some Environmental/Ecological Groups and Local Authorities. 17 (74%) respondents objected due to the risks on landscape, historic features eg archaeological interests below SAM's and conservation interests such as important open ground habitats and local designations, for example:

“raises serious concerns in relation to the landscape, biodiversity and the historical culture of areas .....the list of designated sites within which landowners would need to consult ...is highly restrictive' (West Lothian Council).”

The remaining 6 (24%) respondents questioned the value of this measure due to uptake being limited by individual Tier 2 allowances, the small size threshold and the risk, in the longer term, of having poor quality unregulated woodland.

18. The three main comments received, (see Table 4), were:

- There were concerns about inappropriate planting and impacts on landscape, historic features, conservation sites and local designations. (34 comments on this issue)
- Allow non-native species, at least a percentage. (28 comments)
- Ensure UK Forestry Standard and issue clear guidance (13 comments)

**Table 3 – Response by Category to Question 1**

Category	Yes		No		Neutral	No Response		
Forest Company/agent	23	79%	3	11%	0	3	10%	
Woodland Owner	3	33%	4	44%	0	2	23%	
Environmental/Ecological	8	50%	6	38%	0	2	12%	
Local Authority	8	44%	7	39%	0	3	17%	
FCS Forestry Forums	1	33%	1	34%	0	1	34%	
Associations Forestry related	4	50%	0	0%	1	1%	3	50%
Woodland Projects	6	86%	1	14%	0	0	0%	
Other	6	75%	1	12%	0	1	13%	
Total	59	60%	23	24%	1	1%	15	15%

**Table 4 – Main Responses to Question 1**

Main Consultation Response	Number
Concerns about inappropriate planting and impacts on landscape, historic features, conservation sites and local designations.	34
Allow non-native species, at least a percentage.	28
Ensure UK Forestry Standard and issue clear guidance	13
Natural regeneration should be eligible	6
Poor and badly maintained woodlands	6
Restrict to native species only.	5
£2,500 insufficient	5
Funding must not come from T3 forestry pot	4
Small woodlands option should be available at T3	4
Uptake could be limited due to T2 allowances	3
Environmental audit should be required for T2.	3
Increase minimum size and extend upper limit to 5 hectares	3

#### Woodland Creation – other woodlands

**Proposal - variable payments (according to woodland type) in support of the establishment and maintenance of larger woodlands with prior approval required in all cases.**

**Q2. Is the system of support for these woodlands a good compromise between simplicity and the need to adjust rates to reflect different circumstances?**

19. There was support for this proposal with 49 (50%) respondents in agreement. 4 respondents were concerned about quality standards with a tariff system and important to retain some flexibility to reflect circumstances eg stocking

20. 17 (18%) objected to this proposal with 8 respondents citing this was due to quality reasons.

21. 32 (32%) applicants did not respond to this question.

22. Whilst it was generally, although not universally, accepted that the new proposals would be simpler to administer and reduce some of the complexity of the current SFGS there were genuine concerns about quality standards with a tariff system and that it was important to retain flexibility to reflect circumstances and to maintain the higher standards introduced via SFGS eg variable stocking

An example response to the proposal on quality issue was “ ... considers that this ‘compromise’ should represent a pragmatic way forward, so long as flexibility to reflect different circumstance is retained in practice ... If the module and tariff approach is adopted then greater detail in good practice operations should be incorporated so as to maintain the higher standards of establishment that have been introduced as a result of the recent SFGS” (Scottish Rural Property and Business Association).

23. The three main comments received on this question (see Table 6) were:

- There was concern about quality. The tariff /simple modelling system will result in a decline of standards. (12 comments)
- Tariff system will be simpler to administer and reduce complexity. (6 comments)
- Greater detail in good practice operations to ensure higher standards as a result of SFGS. (3 comments)

**Table 5 – Response by Category to Question 2**

Category	Yes	No	No Response
Forest Company/agent	15	6	8
Woodland Owner	2	4	2
Environmental/Ecological	8	2	6
Local Authority	11	1	6
FCS Forestry Forums	1	0	2
Associations Forestry related	3	1	4
Woodland Projects	5	2	0
Other	4	1	3
Total	49 50%	17 18%	32 32%

**Table 6 – Main Responses to Question 2**

Main Consultation Response	Number
Concern about quality. Tariff /simple modelling system will see decline in standards.	12
Simpler to administer and reduce complexity	6
Greater detail in good practice operations to ensure higher standards as a result of SFGS	3

<b>Q3. Do these models and rates adequately reflect the range of situations likely to be encountered?</b>
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24. 28 (28%) respondents supported the proposals.

25. 31 (32%) objected to the proposal. 25 respondents objected due to the models or rates. This consisted of 14 due to lack of urban model, 1 due to lack of shooting or shelterbelt model, 6 due relative low native woodland rate and 4 due to inflexibility of tariff rate for difficult and marginal situation.

26. 39 (40%) respondents were either neutral or did not respond to this specific question.

27. The three main comments received to this question (see Table 8) were:

- Models and rates do not reflect urban sites (14 comments)
- Tariff rate method inflexible and rates do not reflect difficult or marginal areas (10 comments)
- Allow flexibility in how trees established – methods and stocking density (9 comments)

**Table 7 – Response by Category to Question 3**

Category	Yes		No		Neutral		No Response	
Forest Company/agent	12		5		5		7	
Woodland Owner	2		3		2		2	
Environmental/Ecological	4		5		1		6	
Local Authority	4		10		2		2	
FCS Forestry Forums	1		1				1	
Associations Forestry related	1		1		3		3	
Woodland Projects	1		3		3		0	
Other	3		3		0		2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23%</b>

**Table 8 – Main Responses to Question 3**

Main Consultation Response	Number
Models and rates do not reflect urban sites	14
Tariff rate method inflexible and rates do not reflect difficult or marginal areas	10
Allow flexibility in how trees established – methods and stocking density	9
Native Woodland rates should be increased to reflect public benefits	8
Premium for genetically improved rate does not reflect range of material. Variety of payments needed. (see Appendix 3)	8
Rates not sufficient where tree shelters are required	6
Fencing measurements based on ground measurements rather than map	5
In aid of simplicity, annual maintenance grant replaced with one grant	3
Guidance on outcomes expected to reduce any disputes	3
Grants should be based on either standard costs or the actual costs	3

### Farmland Premium Payments

28. Rates and eligibility criteria are currently being reviewed and it is anticipated that the Farmland Premium scheme will be incorporated into the system of forestry support measures from 2007. There was no specific question related to Farmland Premium although there were some comments received (see Table 9) about this support measure.

**Table 9 – Main Responses to Farmland Premium**

Main Consultation Response	Number
Definitive statement on the future of Farmland Premium required to give confidence to industry.	4
Concern over different rate for farmer and non-farmer	3

### Energy Crops

29. Short rotation coppice will be supported by a one-off establishment grant of £1000 per ha payable on completion of the initial planting and subject to evidence that the grower has a contractual arrangement with an end user and/or has proposals to consume the material within the applicants business. There was no specific question related to Energy Crops although there were some comments received (see Table 10) about this support measure.

**Table 10 – Main Responses to Energy Crops**

Main Consultation Response	Number
Concern on budget impact if uptake escalates	3
'Contractual agreement with an end user and/or proposals to consume the material within the applicants business' may be too restrictive	3
Support for biomass from existing woodlands as SRC not most efficient way. Allow SRF	3

## Sustainable Woodland Management

### Forest Plans

**Proposal - The aim is to encourage woodland owners to prepare a long term forest plan which ensures that the management and development of the woodland meets the standards set out in the UK Forestry Standard.**

**Forest Plans will provide:**

- **A contribution to the cost of preparation of the plan.**
- **Annual forest environment payments linked to the area positively managed under low impact silvicultural systems, the area of native woodland under active management and the contribution of the woodland to access and recreation.**
- **Access to Woodland Improvement Grants including priority access to the proposed restructuring WIG.**
- **Lighter touch regulation in that no further approval will need to be sought for operations carried out which are consistent with the agreed plan.**

**Q4. Do you agree that Forest Plans are an important way of delivering sustainable forest management and that we should be encouraging owners to enter the scheme?**

29. There was a very high response rate to this question with 78 (80%) agreeing that Forest Plans were important.

**Table 11 – Response by Category to Question 4**

Category	Yes	No	Neutral	No Response
Forest Company/agent	23	2	0	4
Woodland Owner	6	0	1	2
Environmental/Ecological	14	0	0	2
Local Authority	16	0	0	2
FCS Forestry Forums	1	0	0	2
Associations Forestry related	6	0	0	2
Woodland Projects	6	0	0	1
Other	6	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>
	<b>80%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>17%</b>

**Q5. Do you have any views on the appropriate level of detail that should be included in a Forest Plan?**

30. There was a wide variety of views on the level of detail that a Forest Plan should contain. Some respondents were advocating a simple and lighter touch approach, some were content with the current detail and some were emphasising the need for full details on

a conservation, historic, landscape issues and that simplification/lighter touch could result in low quality management proposals.

31. The four main comments were (see Table 13):

- Level of detail should reflect scale, location, woodland type, complexities and sensitivities. With less required for smaller woods (14 comments).
- Forest Plans should be flexible to cover market conditions, windblow, without need for further consultation (11 comments).
- Forest Plans should be linked and compliant with UKWAS (11 comments)
- Request for simplicity (ie minimum detail) (11 comments).

A suggested proposal was:

<b>Size of woodland</b>	<b>Detail</b>
> 100 ha	If predominately commercial woodland in a felling/replanting cycle then similar detail as LTFFP but incorporate a streamlined/lighter touch approach If native or sensitive site more detail required,
50-100 ha	Simpler abbreviated version unless sensitivities
<50 ha	Only statement of management objectives unless sensitivities

**Table 12 – Response by Category to Question 5**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No Response</b>
Forest Company/agent	24	5
Woodland Owner	6	3
Environmental/Ecological	14	2
Local Authority	14	4
FCS Forestry Forums	2	1
Associations Forestry related	7	1
Woodland Projects	7	0
Other	7	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>81 83%</b>	<b>17 17%</b>

**Table 13 – Main Responses Question 5**

Main Consultation Response	Number
Level of detail should reflect scale, location, woodland type, complexities and sensitivities. With less required for smaller woods.	14
Forest Plans should be flexible to cover market conditions, windblow, without need for further consultation.	11
Forest Plans should be linked and compliant with UKWAS.	11
Request for simplicity (ie minimum detail)	11
Should be strategic plans	9
Full details on landscape, historic, conservation interests (eg LBAP, local designations, IFS,	9
Present approach adequate	7
Forest Plan not overly prescriptive format. Guidance should follow Section 2 UKWAS	5
Restructuring approvals incorporated into Plan	4
Concern about process	4
For larger (>100ha) productive woodlands only	4

### Forest Plan Preparation Grant

**Proposal - A payment will be made to reflect the costs of survey, data collection, plan preparation and consultation. Proposed payment rates are:**

- £20/ha for the first 200ha
- £5/ha thereafter
- £750 de minimus payment

**Q6. Do these rates adequately reflect the costs of preparing a strategic Forest Plan?**

32. 21 (21%) respondents agreed with the rates.

33. 24 (25%) respondents considered the rates inadequate, 11 citing that cost was dependent on complexity and 9 citing that costs were too low for effective consultation.

34. 17 (17%) respondents found it difficult to answer this question as it depended on the detail required.

35. The 3 main comments were:

- Consultation is a key factor unlikely that costs are enough for effective consultation (10 comments).
- Cost depends on complexity of site and level of detail (16 comments)
- Difficult or unable to answer as depends on detail required (17 comments)

Conclusion: Cost of a plan is very dependent on the level of detail required, the complexity of the site and in particular the level of consultation. Proposed area payment system is simple but not flexible enough where additional input required. Alternative method of payments should perhaps be considered.

**Table 14 – Response by Category to Question 6**

Category	Yes	No	Difficult to answer	No Response
Forest Company/agent	5	11	5	8
Woodland Owner	3	2	1	3
Environmental/Ecological	4	6	2	4
Local Authority	4	2	1	11
FCS Forestry Forums	0	0	1	2
Associations Forestry related	1	0	4	3
Woodland Projects	1	0	3	3
Other	3	3	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25%</b>
			<b>17</b>	<b>17%</b>
				<b>36</b>
				<b>37%</b>

**Table 15 – Main Responses to Question 6**

Main Consultation Response	Number
Difficult or unable to answer as depends on detail required	17
Cost depends on complexity of site and level of detail	16
Consultation is a key factor unlikely that costs are enough for effective consultation	10
Payments are fine for large, straightforward forests or strategic plans (ie not operational plan)	6
Minimum payment too small	5
Consider other payment system (basic level of grant with additional payments for sensitive, complex sites or % of actual costs)	4

### Forest Environment Payments

**Proposal - Annual payments available to holders of an approved plan where specific environmental outputs are delivered:**

- Areas designated, and agreed, for positive management under low impact silvicultural systems (LISS) will be eligible for an annual payment of £28 per ha. The definition of LISS will extend to all continuous cover systems such as shelterwood and group selection with the proviso that planned clear felling should generally not average more than 2 ha in size.
- Areas of native woodland consisting of woodland types which are recognised Habitat Action Plan priorities, and which are under active management towards (or to maintain) favourable condition, will be eligible for an annual payment of £28 per ha.
- Where the plan contains woodland areas which are subject to a high level of access and recreational use, and where sufficient evidence of additional associated costs can be provided, such areas may be eligible for an annual payment of £28 per ha. Further guidance on the eligibility criteria will be developed

**Q7. Do you agree with the introduction of Forest Environment Payments and do you have any comments on the activities to be supported by the proposed FEP?**

36. The Forest Environment Payment proposal was strongly supported across all groups with 67 (68%) agreeing with the proposal.

37. The three main comments were (see Table 17):

- Additional category for historic features and designed landscapes
- Payments too small for small woodlands and/or urban areas
- Payment is low if deer management also required within grant. Consider separate deer WIG.

**Table 16 – Response by Category to Question 7**

Category	Yes		No		Neutral		No Response	
Forest Company/agent	18		1		5		5	
Woodland Owner	5		2		0		2	
Environmental/Ecological	14		0		0		2	
Local Authority	13		1		2		2	
FCS Forestry Forums	1		0		0		2	
Associations Forestry related	4		1		0		3	
Woodland Projects	6		0		0		1	
Other	6		0		0		2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20%</b>

**Table 17 – Main Responses to Question 7**

Main Consultation Response	Number
Additional category for historic features and designed landscapes	4
Payments too small for small woodlands and/or urban areas	4
Payment is low if deer management also required within grant. Consider separate deer WIG	4
Rates not high enough	4
Payment must be targeted for priority biodiversity (see responses for definition)	4
Must target non-woodland HAP as well as woodland priority species and habitats	4
Grants must be linked to activity with clear guidance on eligibility	3
Appropriate grazing systems also recognised	3

Woodland Improvement Grants (WIGs)

## Restructuring WIG

**Proposal - A restructuring WIG for approved felling and restocking based on two components:**

- An income foregone payment
- An additional payment for additional cost of restocking with other than Sitka spruce.
- Payments will be SS £500/ha, other conifers £650/ha, Broadleaved plantation £800/ha Native broadleaved woodland £900/ha
- There will be a presumption in favour of:
  - broadleaved woodland being retained as broadleaved woodland.
  - native species used within woodland which is designated or a recognised Habitat Action Plan (HAP) priority.
  - restocking with appropriate native species on PAWS
- An additional £70 per ha for SS, other conifers and Broadleaved plantation where genetically improved planting stock is used.
- Owners may opt for restocking by natural regeneration.

**Q8. Do you support the principle of a restructuring WIG and do you have any comments on the proposed rates?**

38. The principle of a restructuring WIG was strongly supported with 69 (72%) respondents agreeing with the proposal. However there were varied and conflicting comments on the rates. A total of 14 respondents commented that the rates were too low - this consisted of:

- 5 respondents saying that all rates were too low
- 3 saying Sitka spruce and other conifers were too low
- 3 advocating that native and broadleaved rates were too low
- 3 saying that rates for species other than Sitka spruce were too low

There was concern coming from the forest industry that low rates will encourage a move away from productive forestry, for example “ The indications are that the pendulum is swinging dramatically away from real support for the commercial forestry industry ...” (Tom McLellan, Forest Manager).

There was also the call for higher rates for native and broadleaved woodland, for example “ There should be an enhanced rate for restocking native species on such sites (PAWS or HAP priority woodlands) in recognition of the enhanced public benefit ...” (LINK).

39. The three main comments were (see Table 19):

- Rates are too low
- Cost of fencing and/ or tree shelters should also be available
- Sitka spruce is mainstay of our industry and this species should not be discriminated against

**Table 18 – Response by Category to Question 8**

Category	Yes	No	Neutral	No Response
Forest Company/agent	19	0	3	7
Woodland Owner	7	0	0	2
Environmental/Ecological	12	1	0	3
Local Authority	15	0	0	3
FCS Forestry Forums	1	0	0	2
Associations Forestry related	4	0	0	4
Woodland Projects	5	0	0	2
Other	7	0	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b> <b>72%</b>	<b>1</b> <b>1%</b>	<b>3</b> <b>3%</b>	<b>24</b> <b>24%</b>

**Table 19 – Main Responses to Question 8**

Main Consultation Response	Number
Rates are too low	15
Cost of fencing and/ or tree shelters should also be available	9
Sitka spruce is mainstay of our industry and this species should not be discriminated against	5
Not restocking PAWS or HAP priority woodlands with native species should be defined. This should be restricted to where natural regeneration is used as part of CCF.	5
Enhanced rate for restocking native species on PAWS and HAP priority woodlands	5
'genetically improved' should be restricted to improvements through breeding rather than genetic modification	5
Where ground prep is required on restock sites, 50% of grant once work is done and 50% on satisfactory establishment	5
Presumption of native species on PAWS sites too restrictive	4
Presumptions too restrictive	4
Rates will encourage a move away from commercial productive forestry	3

**Q9. Do you have any comments on the list of proposed WIGs?**

40. 78 (80%) respondents provided comments on this question, one of the highest response rates within the Consultation.

41. The three main comments (see Table 21) are:

- Must include flexibility – alternative methods to standard operations (6 comments)
- Include UKBAP priority habitats and species WIG, Priority open ground habitat and management and include pre-commercial and uneconomic tree removal ( all 7 comments)
- Add litter picking (9 comments)

**Table 20 – Response by Category to Question 9**

Category	Yes	No Response
Forest Company/agent	21	8
Woodland Owner	7	2
Environmental/Ecological	16	0
Local Authority	16	2
FCS Forestry Forums	2	1
Associations Forestry related	4	4
Woodland Projects	7	0
Other	5	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>78 (80%)</b>	<b>20 (20%)</b>

**Table 21– Main Responses to Question 9**

Main Consultation Response	Number
<b>General (apply to all categories)</b>	
Must include flexibility – alternative methods to standard operations	6
Independent certification with specific reference to UKWAS	5
Allow higher costs for difficult areas	3
Day labour rates, labour and equipment and day plant hire	3
Payment rates should be more than 50%	2
<b>Improving economic performance</b>	
Include a thinning WIG	4
Include reducing deer numbers	3
Support for Non Timber Forest Products	3
<b>Improving Biodiversity</b>	
UKBAP priority habitats and species WIG	7
Priority open ground habitat and management	7
Include precommercial and uneconomic tree removal	7
Include small scale felling and thinning	6
Black Grouse WIG	6
Capercaillie WIG	5
Ancient/veteran tree protection & management	6
Rhododendron costs should reflect range of conditions	3
Retention/creation of open glades/rides	3
Add fence marking	1
<b>Improving Recreation and access and community relations</b>	
Add litter picking	9
Incentives for owner to engage local community	7
Add safety surveys	6

Main Consultation Response	Number
No activities for community participation – recommend a discretionary payment, based on a % of costs for education, participation and interpretation costs	5
Add drainage for paths	5
Add path maintenance	4
<b>Management Planning and Monitoring</b>	
No monitoring operations	5
Ancient Woodland Management Plan	5
People Involvement Plan	5
NTPF Plan	3

NB 5 organisations submitted similar responses for Q9

**Q10. Do you agree with the principle that Forest Plans should become a prerequisite for access to WIGs in the future?**

42. 56 (57%) respondents support the principle that Forest Plans should become a prerequisite for access to WIGs. 9 (16%) of these respondents qualified their response by saying that the Forest Plan would need to be accessible for all types and size of woodland notably the small woodland and that funding for plan preparation should be adequate.

43. 15 (16%) respondents did not support the proposal. 8 (53%) of these cited that this was because Forest Plans are geared to large scale forestry and this condition would be restrictive for small and urban woodlands

**Table 22 – Response by Category to Question 10**

Category	Yes	No	No Response
Forest Company/agent	14	5	10
Woodland Owner	5	2	2
Environmental/Ecological	13	1	2
Local Authority	10	2	6
FCS Forestry Forums	1	0	2
Associations Forestry related	2	2	4
Woodland Projects	4	3	0
Other	7	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>27</b>
	<b>57%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>27%</b>

**Table 23 – Main Responses to Question 10**

Main Consultation Response	Number
Provided Forest Plans are accessible for all types and size of woodland notably the small woodland and funding for plan prep is adequate	9
Forest Plans are geared for large-scale forestry. This condition would be restrictive for small and urban woodlands	8

## Business Development Support

**Proposal - the situation here mirrors that of the WIGs. Subject to final agreement on the integration of forestry support measures into the LMC system it is proposed that business support measures will be provided by a generic set of Tier 2 and Tier 3 measures available to all land managers. Annex 1 is taken from the Rural Development Plan consultation and shows:**

- The full list of proposed Tier 2 measures. This includes the small woodland grant described in para. 21 and the list of generic Tier 2 measures, some of which may be of interest to woodland owners. (Note that rates have yet to be agreed for these generic measures)
- The full list of proposed Tier 3 measures. This includes the specific forestry measures outlined in paras 27 to 48 and the list of generic measures, some of which may be of interest to woodland owners.

**Q11. Do you have any views on the general principle of integrating the forestry support measures into an umbrella support scheme delivered through the LMC system?**

44. 77 (79%) respondents replied with comments on this issue. 54 (55%) were supportive of an integrated approach, 16 (17%) were not supportive and 7 (7%) were neutral.

45. Whilst the principle of integration was generally accepted there were strong concerns being expressed about the complexity of administration processes in particular about, delays in processing, IACS registration and mapping issues (30 comments).

‘Our main concerns with integrating into an umbrella support scheme relate to the efficiency of processing schemes ...’ (Scottish Woodlands)

There was concern expressed that forestry standards will reduce and that all forestry grants must meet UKFS (7 comments) and that the forestry funding should be ring-fenced (6 comments).

**Table 24 – Response by Category to Question 11**

Category	Supportive	Not Supportive	Neutral	No Response
Forest Company/agent	16	1	4	8
Woodland Owner	3	4	0	2
Environmental/Ecological	13	1	0	2
Local Authority	8	4	2	4
FCS Forestry Forums	1	1	0	1
Associations Forestry related	2	2	1	3
Woodland Projects	6	1	0	0
Other	5	2	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>
	<b>55%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>21%</b>

**Table 25 – Main Responses to Question 11**

Main Consultation Response	Number
Concerns on efficiency and complexities of administration, in particular delays in processing, IACS system and mapping.	30
Concern that forestry standards will reduce. All forestry grants must meet UKFS	7
Forestry budget should be ring fenced	6
Could deter small woodland owners and urban applicants	5

### Top Ups and Challenge Funds

Proposal - provision is made in the Rural Development Regulation for the use of top ups to recognise situations where there are exceptional costs. We propose to use this facility to enhance the rates payable for woodland creation (excluding the small woodlands) and for WIGs by the use of challenge funds (in circumstances where the costs are very variable) and fixed premia where the extra costs are predictable and identifiable. Initial proposals for top ups include:

- providing additional support for woodland creation and management in areas adjacent to communities
- supporting new planting and woodland improvement in other situations which may be identified, at national or regional level, as priorities for delivery of the Scottish Forestry Strategy
- supporting woodland improvement operations in woodland Natura sites and SSSIs

**Q12. Do you agree that top up mechanisms should be used to deliver extra support for particular activities?**

46. There was strong support for a top up mechanism with 76 (78%) respondents agreeing with this proposal. Only 2 (2%) disagreed and 20 (20%) did not respond specifically to this question.

**Table 26 – Response by Category to Question 12**

Category	Yes	No	No Response
Forest Company/agent	18	0	11
Woodland Owner	7	1	1
Environmental/Ecological	13	0	3
Local Authority	16	1	1
FCS Forestry Forums	2	0	1
Associations Forestry related	6	0	2
Woodland Projects	7	0	0
Other	7	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>76 78%</b>	<b>2 2%</b>	<b>20 20%</b>

**Table 27 – Main Responses to Question 12**

Main Consultation Response	Number
Where clear public benefits that are not being achieved by standard rates	5
Challenge funds are uncertain are time consuming and can mean wasted effort	4
Scottish Executive funds should support SFS social agendas rather than forestry budget	4
Top ups available to support sites where costs are higher	3
Must be pitched correctly and careful use where there is market failure, lack of delivery	3

**Q13. Do you have views on which woodland types and/or geographic locations should be highest priorities for extra support through the top up mechanism?**

47. 74 (76%) respondents replied to this question with a wide variety of views on priorities. The three key ones were (see Table 29):

- Native Woodlands to meet UK Biodiversity Action Plan / Habitat Action Plans.
- Continue WIAT
- Continue existing expansion LP's

**Table 28 – Response by Category to Question 13**

Category	Response	No Response
Forest Company/agent	18	11
Woodland Owner	5	4
Environmental/Ecological	13	3
Local Authority	17	1
FCS Forestry Forums	2	1
Associations Forestry related	6	2
Woodland Projects	7	0
Other	6	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>74 76%</b>	<b>24 24%</b>

**Table 29 – Main Responses to Question 13**

Main Consultation Response	Number
Native Woodlands to meet UK Biodiversity Action Plan / Habitat Action Plans	16
Continue WIAT (reduce complexity of process)	11
Continue existing LP	9
Ancient Woodland management and expansion	6
Support SFS priorities	5
Support climate change programme	4
Local and regional priorities	4
National Parks	4
Vacant, derelict and contaminated land	3
LBAP	3
Where conditions make costs higher	3

## Support for Community Projects

**Proposal - we wish to support local community groups seeking to enter into dialogue and relationships with woodland owners to increase the level of community involvement and/or to promote education and health initiatives. This activity is not always directly related to the land and therefore does not readily lend itself to support through WIGs. Accordingly we propose to establish a challenge fund mechanism which will allow such groups to apply for a proportion of the costs involved.**

### **Q14. Do you have views on this, or other, mechanism for supporting community groups?**

48. 58 (59%) respondents agreed with the idea of a mechanism for supporting community groups. 2 (2%) did not support the idea and 38 (39%) did not respond to this question.

49. The main comments were (see Table 31) that funding should also be available to woodland owners (13 comments). Whilst some supported the Challenge Fund approach (5 comments) most respondents (11 comments) who commented on this aspect would prefer a mechanism that is more accessible eg % of actual costs.

**Table 30 – Response by Category to Question 14**

Category	Supportive	Not Supportive	No Response
Forest Company/agent	10	1	18
Woodland Owner	5	1	3
Environmental/Ecological	11	0	5
Local Authority	14	0	4
FCS Forestry Forums	2	0	1
Associations Forestry related	3	0	5
Woodland Projects	7	0	0
Other	6	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>58 59%</b>	<b>2 2%</b>	<b>38 39%</b>

**Table 31 – Main Responses to Question 14**

Main Consultation Response	Number
Funding should also be available to woodland owners	13
Mechanism should not be a Challenge Fund due to uncertainty and waste of resources. % of actual costs	11
Challenge Fund approach supported	5
Available to Groups in partnership with FE	5
Available to communities entering National Forest Land Scheme (NFLS)	5
Available to communities working on woodland crofts or affordable housing projects	4

### Other Comments

50. 49 (51%) respondents provided additional comments to the set of 14 questions. The three key comments were:

- SFGS closure caused uncertainty and forestry needs period of stability.
- Financial support for forestry is not sufficient to deliver SFS. Forestry budget should be ring fenced within LMC system.
- Concern over integration and the IACS process and that new scheme may not lead to desired simplicity.

**Table 32 – ‘Other Comments’ by Category**

Category	Response	No Response
Forest Company/agent	11	17
Woodland Owner	3	6
Environmental/Ecological	13	3
Local Authority	7	11
FCS Forestry Forums	3	0
Associations Forestry related	6	2
Woodland Projects	3	4
Other	3	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>49 51%</b>	<b>47 49%</b>

**Table 33 – Main ‘Other Comments’**

Main Consultation Response	Number
Financial support for forestry is not sufficient to deliver SFS and budget should be ring fenced	13
SFGS closure caused uncertainty and forestry needs period of stability	12
Concern over integration and IACS process (ie new scheme may not lead to desired simplicity)	7

### Scottish Forestry Strategy

51. The current and future status of SFGS received widespread comment within the Scottish Forestry Strategy (SFS) Review, which took place as a two-stage process during 2005 and early 2006. (See Review of Scottish Forestry Strategy – Analysis and Summary of Responses to the First Public Consultation October 2005)

SFGS was regarded as one of the best things to have happened in forestry since 2000. SFGS topped the list as far as NGO’s and Public Sector were concerned.

Specific mention of SFGS included “ ... provisions within the SFGS for stewardship of archaeological assets within forests.... delivering environmentally sustainable forestry, in accordance with Scottish Executive’s stated policy on the historic environment ....and the degree of apparently ‘joined up government’ is welcomed” (Association of Regional and Island Archaeologists), and “the SFGS has encouraged better management practices on restocking sites and has led to a resurgence of interest in good silvicultural practice.

**Project Steering Group Membership****Appendix 1**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Bob McIntosh (Chairman)	Forestry Commission Scotland
Simon Hodge	Forestry Commission Scotland
James Ogilvie	Forestry Commission Scotland
Paul Snaith	Forestry Commission Scotland
Alex Morris	Forestry Commission Scotland
John Risby	Forestry Commission Scotland
Rachel Chamberlain (Secretary)	Forestry Commission Scotland
Tim Liddon	Institute of Chartered Foresters
Andrew Barbour	Scottish Rural Property and Business Association
Grant Moir	Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department

## List of Respondents and Category

## Appendix 2

Response No	Name	Organisation	Respondent Category
1	Gavin Legge	Forestry Commission	Other
2	Eamonn Wall	Eamonn Wall & Co	Forestry Company/Agent
3	Derek Nelson	Forestry Commission	Other
4	John Wood	Strathmore Estates	Woodland Owner
5	Stephen Tong	Tilhill Forestry Ltd	Forestry Company/Agent
6	Dr Fiona King	Moray Equestrian Access Group	Other
7	Stuart Blackhall	Rothiemurchus	Woodland Owner
8	Ben Clinch		Other
9	Ronald David Rose	Eskdale Wood & Wildlife Management Company Ltd	Environmental/Ecological Group
10	Dick Scruton		Forestry Company/Agent
11	David Beevers		Woodland Owner
12	Paul Walton	RSPB Scotland	Environmental/Ecological Group
13	Gavin Johnston	Midlothian Council	Local Authority
14	Fred Conacher	Angus Council	Local Authority
15	Dr Graham Buchan	Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership	Local Authority
16	Andy Greathead	Smiths Gore	Forestry Company/Agent
17	John Little	Tilhill Forestry Ltd	Forestry Company/Agent
18	D J Sulman	UK Forest Products Association	Associations (Forestry Related)
19	Keith Watson		Environmental/Ecological Group
20	Mike Wood	RSPB Scotland	Environmental/Ecological Group
21	Anonymous		Forestry Company/Agent
22	Woodland Trust	Woodland Trust Scotland	Environmental/Ecological Group
23	Stuart Wilkie	Scottish Woodlands Ltd	Forestry Company/Agent
24	Jenny Taylor	Orkney Woodland Development Project	Other
25	Jim Coyle	Glasgow Council	Local Authority
26	Harry Wilson	RTS Ltd	Forestry Company/Agent
27	Toby Wilson	South Ayrshire Council	Local Authority
28	Tom McLellan		Forestry Company/Agent
29	Craig Campbell	National Farmers Union Scotland	Associations (Forestry Related)
30	Chris Stark	Breadalbane Rural Development Association	Other
31	Carol Law	Scottish Agricultural College	Forestry Company/Agent
32	Jane Brann	Dumfries & Galloway Council	Local Authority
33	Dr John C Sheldon	West Lothian Council	Local Authority
34	Bruce Davidson	East Ayrshire Woodlands	Other's
35	Andy Kelly	Fife Council	Local Authority

## List of Respondents and Category

## Appendix 2

36	Simon Jones	Scottish Wildlife Trust	Environmental/Ecological Group
37	LINK	LINK	Environmental/Ecological Group
38	Tim Liddon	Tilhill Forestry Ltd	Forestry Company/Agent
39	MacLeod	North Harris Trust	Woodland Owner
40	Gordon Roger	Clackmannanshire Council	Local Authority
41	Jane Brann	Association of local Government Archaeology Officers Scotland	Environmental/Ecological Group
42	Maurice Rogers	Individual	Other
43	Sandy Cram	Forest Agent	Forestry Company/Agent
44	K Mackenzie		Woodland Owner
45	Mark Smith	West Dunbartonshire Council	Local Authority
46	Ian Thomas	DCP	Forestry Company/Agent
47	Bill McQueen	Historic Scotland	Environmental/Ecological Group
48	Christine Kelly	Central Scotland Forest Trust	Woodland Projects
49	Simon Rennie	Central Scotland Regional Forestry Forum	FSC Local Forums
50	Ian Edwards	Falkirks Council	Local Authority
51	Mike Libera	The Crown Estate	Woodland Owner
52	Hamish Robertson	C K D Galbraith	Forestry Company/Agent
53	James Scott	BASC Scotland	Other
54	Scott Wilson		Forestry Company/Agent
55	Simon Hart		Other
56	Roger Smith	Woodland Consultancy	Forestry Company/Agent
57	Geoff Mather	Midlothian Council	Local Authority
58	John Sheldon	Central Scotland Forest Local Authority Forum	Local Authority
59	Diane Macpherson	Comhairle's	Local Authority
60	James Mackenzie	Shetland Amenity Trust	Woodland Projects
61	Jonathan Hall	Scottish Rural Property and Business Association	Associations (Forestry Related)
62	Andrew Little	Royal Scottish Forestry Society	Associations (Forestry Related)
63	Grant Moir	Loch Lomand & The Trossachs National Park Authority	Other
64	Isobel Davidson	Aberdeenshire Council	Local Authority
65	Bob Wilson	Scottish Woodlands Ltd	Forestry Company/Agent
66	David Leslie	Scottish Woodlands Ltd	Forestry Company/Agent
67	Vicky Cairns	The National Trust for Scotland	Environmental/Ecological Group
68	Jonathan Wordsworth	Scottish Archaeology	Environmental/Ecological Group
69	Bruce Taylor	Scottish Woodlands Ltd	Forestry Company/Agent
70	Irene Johnston	The Game Conservancy Trust	Environmental/Ecological Group

## List of Respondents and Category

## Appendix 2

71	Jamie Farquhar	The Confederation of Forest Industries	Associations (Forestry Related)
72	Colin MacBrayne	Woodland Consulting	Forestry Company/Agent
73	Ian Ross	Highland Regional Forestry Forum	FSC Local Forums
74	Trace Benfield	Highland Council	Local Authority
75	John Thomson	Scottish National Heritage	Environmental/Ecological Group
76	Mark Forest	North Lanarkshire Council	Local Authority
77	Gordon Gray Stephens	Scottish Native Woods	Environmental/Ecological Group
78	Dr Jean Balfour		Woodland Owner
79	Ritchie J Hart	Scottish Woodlands Ltd	Forestry Company/Agent
80	Piers Voysey	Reforestation Scotland	Environmental/Ecological Group
81	Jon Hollingdale	Community Woodland Association	Woodland Projects
82	Patrick Higgins	Scottish Woodlands Ltd	Forestry Company/Agent
83	Paul Medley	Scottish Woodlands Ltd	Forestry Company/Agent
84	Will Anderson	Bidwells	Forestry Company/Agent
85	Athole McKillop	Bywell Estates	Woodland Owner
86	Rachel Avery	Scottish Wildlife Trust	Other's
87	Stuart Johnston	Scottish Woodlands Ltd	Forestry Company/Agent
88	Raymond Henderson	Bidwells	Forestry Company/Agent
89	Simon Armstrong	The Confederation of Forest Industries	Associations (Forestry Related)
90	Becky Shaw	Scottish Crofting Foundation	Associations (Forestry Related)
91	Campbell Gemmell	Scottish Environment Protection Agency	Environmental/Ecological Group
92	George McRobbie	Tilhill Forestry Ltd	Forestry Company/Agent
93	Allan McLean	Alcan Smelting & Power UK	Woodland Owner
94	George McRobbie	Perth & Argyll Regional Forestry Forum	FSC Local Forums
95	Nial Finnie	Aryshire & Arran Woodland Partnership	Woodland Projects
96	Steve Robertson	North Highland Forest Trust	Woodland Projects
97	Grahame Buchan	Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Structure Plan	Local Authority
98	Priscilla Gordon-Duff		Woodland Owner
99	Colin Kennedy	Scottish Woodlands Ltd	Forest Company/Agent
100	Jason Sinden	Tilhill Forestry Ltd	Forest Company/Agent

## Genetically Improved Material

## Appendix 3

There are different sorts of improved material which exist for Sitka spruce - the species for which there has been most breeding progress. These can be described as:

0. Unselected material (ie base level)
1. Seed Orchard material
2. Half-sib family mixtures (via vegetative propagation)
3. Full-sib families (via vegetative propagation)

### Gains

Unselected material imported direct from Pacific North West represents the base level of genetic improvement. The vigour gains for 1, 2, 3 categories are similar but the quality improves on going from 1 to 2 to 3. Tree Breeders have been trying to promote the half-sib material on the grounds that wood density and stem form are better. Forest Research have been trying to promote full-sib material on the grounds that it has even better gains for quality traits (density, straightness, branching) and much more uniformity between trees.

### Cost

Categories 2 and 3 cost the manager around 50% to 100% more per thousand than the bare-rooted material raised from seed collected in a seed orchard.

Category	Cost/1000 plants	Cost/ha @ 2,500 stems/ha
0	£125	£312
1	£170	£425
2	£250	£625
3	£250	£625

### SFGS

The current SFGS scheme provided an additional payment of £70/1000 (£175/ha) for improved SS. The definition of improved was that it must be from Category 1, 2 or 3.

Under the new SFGS an additional payment of £70/ha is proposed for genetically improved stock.

### Consultation

There were a number of responses calling for more than one level of premium due to the better gains. A higher premium for veg prop material - which need only apply to Sitka spruce - should encourage managers to plant the best available planting stock which has been specially selected for a construction timber market.

### **Options**

- One rate for improved material. Material must be categories 1 to 3. This may not encourage the use of veg prop which FR are actively promoting and which will provide better timber for the construction market.
- Two rates for improved material. One for Category 1 at £70/ha and a higher premium at £140/ha. This could encourage greater use of the better material with more timber supplying the home construction market.